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MAX O'RELL

The dear Neighbours!

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"John Bull and his Island"

&c., &c.

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"It is so much easier to make up your mind that your neighbour is good for nothing, than to enter into all the circumstances that would oblige you to modify that opinion."—GEORGE ELIOT.

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TO THE READER.

People very often speak ill of their neighbours, not out of wickedness, but merely out of laziness.

As I have observed, both the French and English ascribe their own bad qualities to each other, I have more than once thought of calling this little volume:

POT AND KETTLE.

"But," I said to myself, "no; let them say and do what they will, they are neither of them black, and this title will not do."

To prove that each, though hardly so fair as he paints himself, is not so black as his neighbour paints him, is the aim of the pages which follow.

Dear Reader, French or English, whichever you are, close this book at once, if you hope to find in it "abuse" of your neighbour.

The Chapters I., II., V., and VI. formed part of a Lecture delivered by me at Torquay (*7th Jan*, 1885), *and Glasgow* (*1st Feb*, 1885).

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THE DEAR NEIGHBOURS!

I.

JACQUES AND JOHN.

It is difficult for a Frenchman to live a dozen years in England, conforming to the usages of the country, studying its language and its magnificent literature, and living, with English people, a thoroughly English life, without being naturally led to contrast the land of his birth with the land of his adoption; and the present volume, especially that portion of it which treats of education in England, is the outcome of notes that have long been accumulating.

English education! Alas, how many times my heart has been saddened; how many times my national pride has suffered, as I have observed the English manner of educating children! If we are at the head of the movement of ideas in Europe, how far behind the English are we,

from a practical point of view, in our system of education, which consists in bringing up generations of free-born men between the four prison walls of establishments that are half barrack, half convent, as if fruits, ripened in a hot-house, had more flavour than those that ripen in the open air.

And when one considers that these walls could be demolished, and fields bought for a great deal less money than it costs to go to Asia and found colonies for the use of the English, too numerous to live at home, or the Germans, to whom the Fatherland denies the means of subsistence, one is fain to exclaim:

O sublime nation, how can it be that thou, so noble and intelligent, shouldst be so unpractical!

There is something so fascinating in the English system of education! This old England is the paradise of the young.

It is not when he leaves school that you should begin to inculcate practical common sense in a boy, and give him his first taste of liberty; it is when he leaves the cradle.

It is by giving him his liberty from his earliest years, and inspiring him with confidence in himself, that you make a strong, independent, self-

reliant man of him; it is by never doubting his honour that you make an honourable man of him; it is by allowing boys and girls to grow up in one another's company that you make of them men and women who, at twenty, will find it neither strange nor dangerous to be together.

It seems to me that never was there a system of education invented, which responded so well to these requirements as that adopted in the homes and schools of England.

Ah! if, feeble as I am, I could yet be strong enough to succeed in showing France how a nation of strong men is made, what a recompense would that be for my humble, though conscientious efforts!

I have already spoken a little of England, and a great deal of a certain John Bull, an individual rather narrow-minded, dull, conceited, selfish, and bigoted;* of the John Bull who will tell you that he never took the trouble to learn the violin, because he can hear Joachim or Sarasate for a shilling. I shall have occasion to speak of him many more times in the course of this little volume; but often, too, of another very different

* When an Englishman, speaking of one of his compatriots, says: "He is a regular John Bull," it implies all these epithets. The "regular John Bull" is our *M. Perrichon*.

John Bull, business-like, it is true, business-like above all things, but educated, intelligent, and affable.

Frenchmen, living abroad, have a double duty to fulfil: to enlighten France, as well as their adopted country, upon the subject of their several virtues and shortcomings.

One good effect of the *Coup d'Etat* of 1851, and the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, was to cause a great number of Frenchmen to take up their abode in England—Frenchmen honourable, industrious, and of high attainments, who have greatly helped to lift the veil of ignorance and misconception that hung between England and France. I speak of such men as Louis Blanc, Alphonse Esquiros, Valentin, and others still at work.

To see two nations like these—the happiest, the richest, the most intelligent, the most industrious—to see two such pioneers of civilisation respect and love each other, ought not this to be the desire of every sensible man, whether he dwell on the north or the south of the Channel? Two nations also passionately fond of liberty in every shape, and each possessing the glorious goddess

(O strange irony of fate!), one in reality under a monarchy, the other in dreams under a republic!

But, alas! two neighbours, whose characters are perfectly opposite, whose common interests are continually clashing, who are constantly having their feelings of jealousy excited by ignorant or malevolent persons, scarcely seem made to love each other; and it is to be feared that the measure of respect of the one for the other may be gauged for some time longer by the number of ironclads each can put to sea.

These really are considerations sufficient to discourage the best meaning of philanthropists.

Yet, let us imagine two men inhabiting neighbouring houses. Let us call them Jacques and John, if you will. Over their party wall these worthy neighbours look at each other's physiognomies, and Jacques says to himself:

"My dear fellow, I don't know, but I hardly like the look of your face; you look too good by half to please me, I wouldn't trust you farther than I could see you. I shall keep an eye on my apples and count them every morning."

John, on his side, says to himself:

"Hum! my fine fellow! your get-up is not calculated to inspire confidence. I don't like the look of your big black moustache and your hat on the side of your head. Besides, I don't see you

go to church regularly on Sundays. I must keep a sharp look-out. I have noticed your cat prowling about my garden, and if, one of these days, I miss any of my chickens, I shall set poison for her."

For a long while these two worthy fellows keep on the defensive, ready to spring upon each other, if only an urchin of the neighbourhood should steal an apple from one garden or a chicken from the other.

One fine day a friend comes to visit Jacques. "Halloa!" cries he, "you have John for a neighbour, I see; he is an old friend of mine, a capital fellow; I must introduce you."

The introduction over; the two neighbours make acquaintance. To their great surprise each finds the other amiable, obliging, full of good qualities of which he never suspected him. Thus at length they make the best of friends.

Having become English in habits, while remaining French at heart, why should I not profit by a few hours of success on each side of the Channel, to destroy—as far as lies in my humble power—a few of the thousands of absurd prejudices still existing in France on the subject of England and in England on the subject of France?

May I be allowed to say that, during twelve years, many hundreds of young Englishmen, vigorous in body and mind, passed through a class-room of which I shall always retain a most pleasant recollection?

Did I succeed in teaching them the principles of the prose of Voltaire, that grand prose which will save us from oblivion, whatever may happen?

I do not know.

But what I do know—what I am perfectly sure of—is that, under the able guidance of the most learned and the most generous of men, I did my best, not only to make them appreciate the beauties of the French language, but to instil into each one the love of our dear France.

II.

JACQUES BONHOMME.

JACQUES BONHOMME is a small landowner, fond of his country, his cottage, his fields, his cow, and his *gros sous*. His great aim is to be independent of the world, and to this end he takes great care of his pence, and has no need of any French John Bright to tell him that if he does so, the pounds will take care of themselves; it is a sentiment inborn in him. If you wish to make him happy, when he brings you a load of wood or a cask of cider, pay him in silver five-franc pieces—his coin of predilection. He will take gold without repugnance, but will look askance at a bank-note. If you were to tender him a cheque, the odds are ten to one that he would immediately go for a policeman.

He does not seek to imitate the dweller in cities, either in his habits, speech, or dress. All he has on his back is not worth more than four or five francs, but his blouse is new when he buys it, and it belongs to him, as my black coat belongs to me.

His food costs him about fourpence or fivepence a day at the outside, but it is wholesome and abundant. He keeps early hours and saves his candles, he lives a healthy life and saves doctors' bills. When he lies down to die, it is in his own bed, and his parish has not to pay for his funeral.

Every French village has its poor, but pauperism is unknown, for Jacques Bonhomme is charitable, and he always finds means to send a basin of soup to a neighbour whom he knows to be in want of one. It is only for the loafer that he has no pity; when he has called a fellow-creature *faignant*, he has used the strongest invective in his vocabulary.

In politics, he takes very little interest, if any. All governments are acceptable to him, except the one that happens to be in power when he gets bad weather for the harvest. How else explain the fact that changes of government have always been made in Paris without his sanction, or even his opinion being asked for; and that the seven million five hundred thousand men who vote for the Republic to-day, are the seven million five hundred thousand who, when they were asked by the Emperor, in the year of the Plebiscit, whether they would still have him or not, answered almost to a man: "I will."

Jacques Bonhomme scarcely knew what a Plebiscit

was; but he went to see his parish priest, who said to him:

"Are you married, Jacques?"

"Yes, *monsieur le curé*."

"Well, and what did they make you say on your wedding day?"

"*Ma foi, monsieur le curé*, they made me say, *I will*."

"Well, my good fellow, that is all the Emperor asks you to say; that is voting."

Whereupon Jacques went and threw his *oui* in the electoral box.

There is one form of government, however, of which he would dread the return: the government of the *curés*. He has not forgotten the tithe and the *corvée*, nor the days when the monks used to come and pay little visits to his wife and his cupboard, to bless his children, and relieve him of his superfluous butter and eggs.

He is no great churchgoer; yet, when he meets his parish priest, he touches his cap, but almost as he would touch it to an equal.

He is beginning to know how to hold a pen, but he rarely uses one except for the purpose of adding up his little accounts. As to letter-writing, he sees no fun in a frivolous pastime that would cost him three *sous*.

He has been placed by Nature on a fertile soil

that yields him all he needs, and if you were to talk to him of emigration, he would stare and ask you what crime he had committed to deserve transportation. There is no more home-abiding creature upon the face of the earth.

On the wall of the village schoolroom he has seen a map of the world, but although he is willing to believe that it fairly represents the earth we live on, he would fain have seen the name of his dear village on it. He doubts not that the earth is round, since his *curé* and his schoolmaster say so; but the only proof he has of it is the sight of the line of horizon that greets his eyes, when he climbs the hill-top.

I know two or three of these honest French workers, who were induced to go to Paris in 1878, to see the Universal Exhibition. Such was their suspicion of the gay capital that, before setting out, they sewed their golden louis in the lining of their coats, and had their wills made by the notary.

It is when he is making a purchase, at the fair or at the market, that Jacques is in his element.

Look at him as he takes a preliminary turn or two around the little rickety stall. He hesitates a long while before making up his mind; he knows that if he seem to have a fancy for any particular

article, he will probably be asked a good price for it. So it is only cautiously, and with a look of indifference on his face, that he at length draws near. Next, taking up the coveted object with the limpest of fingers, he gives off sundry little grunts of disapprobation. He turns it over and over, looks at it well on all sides, shakes his head, and invariably finishes by dropping it back in its place again.

Then he turns, and makes as though he would go away, but after having taken a few steps, he brings up, comes back, and indicating the object of his manœuvres with a contemptuous finger, says to the vendor:

"What do you want for *that?*"

He has scarcely heard the reply before he exclaims: "You mean that for a joke, I suppose."

Watch him a little later, as he goes off, carrying his purchase in triumph, and you will plainly see that he has made a bargain.

If Solomon had known Jacques Bonhomme, we might be inclined to think that it was he, whom the Hebrew king had in his mind's eye, as he wrote: "It is naught, it is naught, saith the buyer; but when he has gone his way, then he boasteth." Not that the compatriots of Solomon could have been bad at a bargain, if one may judge of them by their descendants.

Jacques' manner is no less remarkable when it comes to the *quart d'heure de Rabelais.*

He seldom carries his money in his trousers or waistcoat pocket. He confides it to the depths of a long purse, from which it is only to be extracted with difficulty, and this purse is hidden inside his blouse, and carefully attached to it by a string.

When the operation of paying has to be performed, Jacques gently lifts his blouse, and, making a rather wry face, draws forth his purse from its hiding-place. He rarely faces the enemy on these occasions. He turns his back to you, and pretends to have great difficulty in getting his money out of his recalcitrant purse. Perhaps he hopes you will get tired of waiting, and say to him: "Never mind, Jacques, you can pay me another day."

When at last he has the money in his hand, he turns towards you, holds it out, draws it back, but eventually makes up his mind to the loss of this little portion of his patrimony.

Then he begins to wonder whether you have not taken him in; but, as it is too late to draw back, he resolves that he will be a match for you next time.

JACQUES BONHOMME'S wife is the fortune of France. Hard-working, thrifty, sober, you will always see her busy, either working in the field, selling her wares in the market-place of the nearest town, or engaged about her little household. She is the personification of industry, and when the winter of life comes on, you will find her by the chimney corner, or near the cottage door, keeping watch over the little ones, while she knits or spins; it is with her needles or her distaff in her hand that she peacefully passes away from earth. Not an hour in the life of the good Jacqueline has been spent in indolence.

It is she who hides the five-franc pieces in the corner of her linen cupboard, only to be taken out when there is an opportunity of rounding off the little family domain. Shares, bonds, and all such lottery tickets, she leaves for the small *bourgeois* of the town, who love to wait their turn at the door of the *Recette particulière* on the day of a national loan. No papers for her; what she likes is a field or a cow; she will have nothing else, all the rest is beyond her understanding.

It is on market-day that you should see her! She makes light of a ten or twelve mile walk to the chief town of her district, carrying a basket loaded with fruit or vegetables on each arm. In the evening, you may meet her with baskets

empty, but pockets full, trudging back to her peaceful cottage—the centre of all her affections. Follow her along the road a little, and you will see that, as she goes, she manages to busy her fingers on a pair of stockings for the little one.

Her daughter wears neither flounces on her skirt, nor feathers on her hat; but, though she is dressed in a plain coarse serge gown, and a simple snowy cap, her round rosy cheeks tell you that she is healthy, and a pair of eyes that stare at you like two field daisies tell you that she is pure.

And the patriotism of her! Ah, let me here pay my humble tribute of admiration and gratitude that she has so great a claim to! Who among us French has not kept, engraven on his memory, the *souvenir* of the devoted peasant women of Normandy, Picardy, of Alsace and Lorraine, and all they did for us in that terrible year that would have seen the death of France, if France could die? Who among us has not admired and blessed them? With a sad smile on her face, how kindly the poor Jacqueline welcomed the weary soldier, worn-out with fatigue and hunger! And, while the rich *bourgeois* too often received us with a frown, as he muttered, "More soldiers!" her greeting was always kindly. "*Entrez, mes pauvres enfants,*" she would cry; "you are tired and hungry. We have not much

to offer here, but you shall have a bed to-night, if it is but a bed of straw, a good soup, and a rasher of bacon, or whatever there is in the cupboard. That will do you good. My own poor lad is fighting somewhere; it is many weeks ago now that I heard from him, but I hope some kind soul is doing for him to-night what I am doing for you." And the good creature would prepare her vegetables, put the soup on the fire, make up beds for us around the hearth, and give us old soft shoes for our poor blistered feet. And when, in the morning, we left her hospitable roof, we would say, "*Allons, maman, adieu et merci.* God bless you for all you have done for us." And as we went our way, she, standing on the threshold of her door, would wave her handkerchief, and watch the regiment out of sight. Then she would turn away, and the evening found her ready to do the same for the next weary band of men that halted at her door.

Yes, yes, my good peasant folk of France, you are the fortune of your country, and you also, with your rustic simplicity, are its generous heart. It is among you that tired human nature drinks deep draughts of pure life-giving air, and forgets the struggles of the city, its noisy pleasures, its ephemeral joys, its jealousies and burning hatreds; it is

in your midst that the soul is tuned into harmony with mankind, and man feels at peace with all the world, as he looks at the bright spring blossoms, breathes the intoxicating perfume of the humid forest, and gazes at Nature, as she emerges from her bath of dew to robe herself in a raiment of light.

III.

JOSEPH PRUDHOMME.

JOSEPH PRUDHOMME, whom the English are fond of representing as a fighting cock, sighing constantly after glory and conquest, is a modest proprietor, peaceful, home-loving, steady-going, whom his mother calls "petit," and his wife leads by the nose.

Glory and conquests! he has had enough of all that: it is peace that he asks for at the top of his voice. Like his social inferior, Jacques Bonhomme, the only conquest that he hankers after, is the conquest of that independence which is assured by a safe investment at three or three and a half per cent.

It is stability in fortunes which constitutes real riches, and that is why France, who has more than six millions of proprietors, is the richest nation in the world.

Joseph Prudhomme is by no means a great

speculator; economical and industrious, he quietly goes on his sober way, until he has amassed the snug little sum that will allow him to live at his ease.

Economy is the very genius of France. The peasant buys a bit of land; the workman puts something in the savings bank, which, at the present moment, has more than £80,000,000 in its coffers; the *bourgeois* buys government securities.

To have from two to five hundred a year, such is his aim. As soon as he has attained it, Joseph knocks off work, takes life easily, and begins to dream of honours. The words Municipal Counsellor, Counsellor of *Arrondissement*, and Mayor, are pleasing to his ear. He has a weakness for uniforms and gold braid; a sword would add an inch or two to his stature.

He is fond of making sounding phrases, and his signature is a masterpiece of inimitable calligraphy.

His game of predilection is dominoes. When he plays at loto, he never fails to add, after announcing the number seven, *la pipe à Thomas*.

When he sends twenty francs to his boy, he scrupulously seals the envelope in five places, and stares incredulously, if you tell him that the English often stuff a bundle of bank-notes into

their letters, and do not take the trouble to register them.

He has the name of being a Republican. I am willing to believe him one, since he now votes for the Republic; but it is less from profound conviction than from the dread of hearing that barricades are being erected in Paris, that he votes for the Government of the day. "*Beati possidentes!*" he cries, there is nothing like tranquillity.

He is administered to his heart's content.

He belongs to a little town, administered by a mayor, two deputy-mayors, and a municipal council; his little town forms part of an *arrondissement*, administered by a sub-prefect and a council of *arrondissement;* his *arrondissement* forms part of a department, administered by a prefect, a council of prefecture, and a general council; his department forms part of France, administered by a President of the Republic, a ministerial council, a council of state, a Senate and a Chamber of Deputies. Add to this, the general council of Agriculture, the general council of Commerce, the council of Manufactures, the council of Mines, the council of Roads and Bridges, the council general of Prisons, the council of War, the council of Finance, the council of the Navy, the council of *prud'hommes*, the Board of Health, and a

hundred others, and you will see that, if Joseph pays taxes, he has the satisfaction of knowing that he is counselled abundantly.

His accounts are kept by an administration that "all Europe envies," and carried to the fourth decimal, a luxury which costs him a good fourth of his revenue in *personnel* and red-tape, but which on the other hand saves the Treasury at least half-a-crown per annum. The centimes column is guaranteed exact by every French clerk; this ought to console Joseph for the little errors which may exist in the column of the millions. In a ministerial office, a mistake of a centime puts the whole staff in commotion, from the ground floor to the roof, and if a clerk were to propose to replace the centime out of his own pocket, and thus set matters right, he would be looked upon as a dangerous man, and his career would be blasted, unless indeed the affair should make some noise, in which case he might see himself provided with a seat in the Chamber of Deputies.

In business, Joseph's probity is almost proverbial, and his punctuality carried to a ridiculous point. On quarter day, he pays his rent at the stroke of noon. In England, the landlord can only demand his rent twenty-one days after it is due, and bills

are only presented after three days' grace. His commerce is hindered by his exaggerated attention to trifles, but when he sells you a pair of boots, you can put them on, and walk in them.

He is jealous of his reputation, and a compliment paid to the quality of his merchandise gives him as much pleasure as the profit he gets out of it.

I do not hesitate to affirm that not only does the small French *bourgeois* not covet wealth, but that he is almost afraid of it. I might name many old provincial parents, who have written long letters to their sons, commencing with congratulations upon the literary, artistic or other successes they had met with in Paris, and ending with lamentations over the financial ones which had resulted therefrom. These good people were full of fear lest money should raise a barrier between them and their dear son, and thus cloud the happiness of the family.

Joseph rarely renounces his bachelor's life before the age of thirty.

When he marries, woman is not exactly an enigma to him; but do you think he is any the worse husband for that? Not he. The purity of his wife becomes an object of worship for him; he recognises in her a moral being so superior to himself that he soon abdicates all his prerogatives in

her favour; and he consoles himself for the authority that he rarely knows how to maintain in his home, with the thought that the administration of his affairs is in safe hands. Taking life placidly, he grows round and rubicund; he is well cared for, petted, coddled; he lives in clover. His wife is his friend, his confidante. If from one cause or another the family revenue diminishes, she knows it as soon as her husband; with her economy and good management, she faces the danger; with her energy, she wards off ruin from her threshold. In important matters, as well as in the smallest, she has both a consultative and deliberative voice. Content with her supremacy in the home circle, she asks for no other rights; politics are not in her line. And yet a French woman is far from lacking patriotism. Those same timid girls and tender mothers who could not bear us out of their sight, are the women who said to us, not long since: "Do not think about us, your country claims you, do your duty."

Provincial life in France is narrow, limited in the highest degree, I must admit; but what wealth of love and happiness those little coquettish-looking white houses hold! They are so many nests!

The greatest charms about our provincials, who

are constantly made the butt for Parisian witticisims, is that they do not change.

When you live that feverish Parisian life, that consumes you by overtaxing your intellectual powers, what a treat it is to go and see the old folks, in the old house that is standing there just as you remember it in your childhood! Every room, every piece of furniture, is linked in your memory with some event of bygone days. How you revive in that old place!

In the thickest darkness, you could find everyone. Your dear old mother is there in her chair by the window, in her favourite place, which has not altered so much as an inch. The old servant, who danced you on her knee, watches at the door for the first glimpse of the carriage that brings you. And the screams of joy, and the clapping of hands! What welcome awaits you! Everyone speaks at the same time, you are taken by storm, nobody thinks of checking his delight (in France, joy is allowed free outlet). You go up to the room that used to be yours to shake off the dust of your journey. Nothing is altered, everything is there, just where it always was in the old days; you feel as if you had grown twenty years younger. You go down, and in the dining-room you see the large fireplace that has undergone no stupid modernising. Will you ever forget the

blood-curdling ghost stories that you listened to so breathlessly in the twilight, as you roasted chestnuts in the embers? What shivers of horror would run through you as you nestled close up in that chimney corner! And so all the past revives again: the April walks in quest of dewy primroses, the scamper over the daisy-strewn fields in the glorious summer sunshine; the clandestine raids on the pear-trees, and the scoldings from mother, who was sure to read the history of the afternoon in the meek faces and torn raiment.

The Frenchman of the provinces wraps himself up in his family, almost to the exclusion of the outer world. In the streets he salutes his acquaintances with a profound bow; on New Year's Day he pays them a visit of ceremony, offers the ladies a packet of *marrons glacés*, or a couple of oranges; but his hospitable table is only open to his children, who, as long as he lives, are at home in the house. One or two intimate friends at most are allowed to penetrate freely into the little circle: the time is killed, even killed by inches. A garden, chickens, ducks, the Saturday *pot-au-feu*, such is the extent of his ambition. All this luxury can be obtained for about twenty pounds a month. When his three per cent rentes secure him this sum, he retires from business.

His family being generally small, he has all his dear ones around him, under his roof.

He idolises children, and makes the most charming father in the world.

To give a good education to his sons, and a good *dot* to his daughters, to see them happily married, and keep them near him after their marriage, to bring up his grandchildren, guide their first tottering steps, indulge them, make companions of them, launch them in life, and see them all assembled around his death-bed, such is the life of the good Joseph Prudhomme.

IV

A TRUE-BORN BRITON.

WOULD you know what an Englishman is—let him be a duke's son, officer in Her Majesty's service, student, school-boy, clerk, shop-boy, gentleman, or street rough?

Well, an Englishman is a lusty fellow, fearless, hardy, and strong-knit, iron-muscled, and mule-headed, who, rather than let go a ball that he holds firmly in his arms, will perform feats of valour; who, to pass this ball between two goals, will grovel in the dust, reckless of lacerated shoulders, a broken rib or jawbone, and will die on a bed of suffering with a smile upon his lips if he can only hear, before closing his eyes, that his side has won the game.

Multiply this Englishman by the number of the stars in the firmament, and you will arrive at a pretty correct idea of England's martial, if not military, force.

The Englishman does nothing by halves. His

favourite adjective is *thorough*. The more difficulties he has to surmount the more he is in his element; he is a curious mixture of lion, mule, and octopus. Outdoing Milo of Crotona, he would manage to withdraw his wrist from the cleft of the oak.

Mr. Gladstone said one day (many years ago): "When I work, I work as hard as I can; when I run, I run as fast as I can; when I jump, I jump as far as I can." He might add now: "When I get into a mess, I plunge into it over head and shoulders."*

Take an Englishman to visit the ruins of some old castle: he will not rest until he has thrust his nose into every nook and cranny of the place, and climbed the most crumbling walls, at the risk of breaking his neck over and over again. He has seen nothing if he has not seen all. You may think yourself lucky if he has not profited by your back being turned for a moment, to go and hoist the Union Jack on the summit of the highest tower. That is a little weakness of his that makes him a trifle inconvenient occasionally, I must say; but, you see, one cannot get on in this world without a certain aptitude for making oneself at home.

* 26th January, 1885. Death of General Gordon at Khartoum.

Truly a strange being, but an interesting subject of study, is this same Englishman. Capable of combining a thousand different personages, of playing a thousand different parts, of doing in Rome (to use his own words) as the Romans do; extreme in each of his acts, presenting the most striking contrasts, but always guided by his reason. Fiery patriot, yet calmly bearing the greatest humiliations while awaiting the propitious moment for taking his innings. In the temple, a publican, crying aloud, "O Lord, I am but a miserable sinner!" Outside its door, a Pharisee, setting up for a marvel of virtue. Worshipper of Mammon and Jehovah, the man most concerned in the interests of the next world, and most wrapped up in the concerns of this.

In the singular, a man upon whose word you can rely as you would upon a trusty sword; in the plural, a people who have too often merited the epithet "perfidious." At home, preaching temperance, even to the forswearing of all drinks but water; abroad, not only encouraging, but enforcing the opium trade. At home, prosecuting the individual that ill-uses an animal, unless, indeed, the animal be a wife; abroad, setting a price upon the head of a recalcitrant foe. At home, punishing with imprisonment the people who obstruct the rowdy processions of the Salvation Army mounte-

banks; in India, sending to prison the same mountebanks, who, in their zeal, might create religious difficulties among a nation that he has subdued.

Opportunist *par excellence*, he never asks all or nothing. He accepts a little as being better than nothing; and thus it is that little by little, without shock or violence, without revolutions, he perfects the machinery of his constitution.

Worshipping his old monarchy, devoted to his old institutions, but ravenous for justice and liberty, he would be ready again to-day to demolish both monarchy and constitution, as he did in the seventeenth century, if his liberty ran the least danger. In politics, possessing the virtues that are indispensable to the prosperity of a nation: respect of the law and respect of power clearly manifested, he always bows to the decision of a majority. Refusing to submit to despotism in any shape or form, he himself keeps in order and discipline all his paid guides and governors: his queen, his princes, his ministers, his generals, his judges, his priests.

Wise, industrious, and persevering, never doubting his strength, above all minding his own business, and imposing upon one and all their attributions and duties, from his sovereign down to the humblest citizen, he has chosen for his motto:

"*Fais bien ce que fais.*"

V.

THE DEAR NEIGHBOURS !

LET us see how these good neighbours have set about inspiring sentiments of love and respect in each other, up to the present time.

It was last year.

A Stock Exchange *canard* had taken its flight one afternoon, about two o'clock, and gone and settled among the offices of Fleet Street. One hour later, London was covered with newspaper contents' bills, announcing, in letters five inches long, that the French troops had been annihilated by the Chinese in Tonquin. Two days later, the little French garrison gained an important victory over the Celestial troops, and the same contents' bills announced the sad intelligence, in minute type, carefully hidden among more or less uninteresting news.

Oh ! the dear neighbours !

A royal English Prince dies in the South of France.

Along the whole line, from Cannes to Calais, the French nation pour forward to show their sympathy with a queen and a young widow in their affliction, and their respect for a nation in mourning. Not one important paper thought it necessary to mention the fact. But a few days after, a pamphlet, not even written by a Frenchman, appeared upon the Boulevards, calling upon the French people, in the name of honour, glory, and prudence, to sink John Bull's Island at the bottom of the sea. No serious French paper honoured the pamphlet so far as to notice it, but the *Times*, and several other large dailies, I might say almost all of them, talked long and loudly on the subject.

Oh! the dear neighbours!

Let books appear in France written with a view to acquainting the French people with the virtues, as well as the oddities, of a great neighbouring nation, and some brutal English penman immediately brings forth a so-called reply,* neither epigrammatical nor grammatical, in which the public are treated to this virtuous and bashful

* A few French papers were ill-advised enough to take notice of one of these effusions. Productions of this kind are disowned by well-educated Englishmen. They are mere book trade speculations—the penalty of success, as the English say; and I may tell my countrymen that the English Press treated the *malpropreté* in question as it deserved.

Briton's experience of Parisian ill-famed resorts—which he of course visited merely for the edification of his countrymen, *en tout bien tout honneur*, you know. As to mentioning one or two French qualities . . . . . catch him if you can!

The English greengrocer divides his asparagus into large and small heads. The fine ones are sold at high prices under the name of English asparagus. The bundles of threads at one shilling figure in his window as *foreign*, which for three-fourths of his customers means French.

In England, the adjective *English* is synonymous with *excellent*. In France, we have an adjective that signifies *excellent*, too, and that is the adjective *French*. Do but make an observation to a French shopkeeper upon the price of his goods, and he will promptly answer: "I keep a cheaper article, but it is naturally of greatly inferior quality . . . . would *Monsieur* like to see my English stock?" In French commerce, *English* is synonymous with *worthless*.

They are really amusing, those worthy neighbours!

Let the French send an army of 200,000 men to the Crimea to assist the English in keeping the Russians out of Constantinople, and you will have

the satisfaction of reading in English books: "We prevailed against Russia with but a handful of men." Not a word about General Bosquet, who, at Inkermann, prevented the "handful of men" from being annihilated. I have seldom met with an Englishman who even remembered the name of Bosquet, or had heard of his Zouaves; but I have met several who have maintained to me that England owed no thanks to France for what she had done in Russia, because the war had been engaged in by Napoleon against the wishes of his subjects.

Oh! the dear neighbours!

Let the French cast loving glances at the western coast of Madagascar, and John Bull, who always bears the tenth commandment in mind, when he looks at a map of the world, is the first to shout at the top of his voice, "Stop thief!"

Let the English honestly ask the French to join them in trying to put down anarchy and Arabi Pacha in Egypt.

France refuses.

She was quite right, no doubt.

But when England has accomplished the task, some French papers are found ready to set down in black and white their little disappointment at seeing Arabi on the losing side; in ceasing to be an

enemy of France, to become an enemy of England, Arabi has changed *rôles;* he is no longer a military dictator, he is a great patriot, a hero, the champion of an oppressed people's rights.

Better still.

Should the cholera break out in the land of the Pharaohs, about the same time, charitable whisperings will be heard upon the Boulevards about its having been imported from India by those rascals of Englishmen, in order to give themselves an excuse for retarding the withdrawal of their troops, and even for permanently taking a footing in Egypt.

Charming, is it not?

I read, not long since, in a French book, the following amiable prediction:

"Before the year 1887, the English navy will be destroyed, London and the Woolwich Arsenal will have been blown up, and, thank heaven, England will have disappeared from the face of the globe."

Oh! the dear neighbours!

But it is when one of these worthy nations has a little campaign in hand that the other is truly delightful to observe.

The names Tunis, Madagascar, and Tonquin on the one side; Egypt, the Soudan, and Afghanistan on the other, each recalls the most lively recollections.

These little wars were, before all things, wars of bondholders and speculators. At heart, I believe the two nations were very indifferent to the results of the expeditions, which chiefly affected the Stock Exchange, and could scarcely bring much honour or profit.

"The destinies of the British Empire are in the hands of the Mahdi," cried a French paper.

"The French Republic, which was able to frustrate the intrigues of the Monarchists, is to-day at the mercy of a Chinese general," replied an English paper.

"England is humiliated in the Soudan, and humiliated in Afghanistan; it is difficult to recover from such degradation in the eyes of the Orientals. Her Indian Empire has not long to live."

"France has used up in Tonquin the little prestige that remained to her," etc., etc.

Such were the amiabilities that were daily retailed for the modest sum of one penny.

"Oh! the dear, dear neighbours! Just as if two nations who in past times astonished the world with their exploits, had need to prove their courage; as if it were imperative to spend one's life in fighting to maintain one's character for bravery!

When politics cease to furnish the good neighbours with material for belittling each other

to their heart's content, do not think that they are at a loss for the wherewithal to continue their little hostilities, for any wood does to feed the fire. There is nothing, even to the beauty of their neighbours' wives and daughters, that they do not take a pleasure in disparaging.

"Englishwomen are long, lean creatures, rendered longer and leaner-looking still by ill-made dresses and mantles that look like umbrella-cases."

I borrow the reply from an important London weekly:

"Frenchwomen are coarse portraitures, *à la* Rubens, of the mere animal aspects of big-haunched, big-bosomed creatures, lacking every trace of the spiritual qualities of womanhood."

Extremely gallant, is it not?

I have said elsewhere, that to go away without saying *good-bye* to the company, was called in English to "take French leave." One or two Englishmen contradicted me; however, I was right; I had the authority of Webster and others on my side.*

But the most curious part of it is, that in France, at the present day, we say: "*S'en aller à*

* The expression also means: "To take without permission."

l'Anglaise." And what do you think that means? Simply, "to go away from a party without taking leave of the mistress of the house."

Take that neighbour!*

When English people alight at a French hotel, and find no soap on the washstand, do you believe they conclude from this that the French carry soap in their trunks when they travel? Not they. They conclude that the French do not wash; or that, if they do, their ablutions are performed by means of a corner of a handkerchief dipped in water.

Mark Twain, the prince of American humorists, exclaims upon entering the bedroom of a French hotel: "What, waiter, no soap! Don't you know that soap is indispensable to an Englishman or an American; and that only a Frenchman can do without it?"

It is true that you find soap on the washstands in English hotels; but the English and their American cousins may perhaps be astonished to hear that Frenchmen would have almost as much

* We may be allowed to remark here, however, that it seems to us very good taste, when at a party, to avoid ostensibly going to take leave of your hostess, who would not thank you if the example should prove contagious, and the whole company should immediately disperse. This little bit of French wickedness, therefore, seems to turn into a compliment.

repugnance to using hotel soap, as they would to using a tooth-brush that they might find on a lodging-house washstand. We will even make bold to inform them that a great many French ladies are so particular as to carry about a supply of bedroom-towels with them when they travel.

Chacun ses goûts, n'est-ce pas ?

To an impartial observer, who goes on his way philosophising, and keeping his eyes open to what passes on either side of the Channel, it is really a very amusing sight to see how the two countries seem to make it their aim, each to do the contrary of what the other does.

Will you have a few rather diverting illustrations, taken right and left?

When we are in difficulties, we take our watch to our *aunt;* the English take theirs to their *uncle.*

In France, the *curé* has a certain number of *vicaires* under his orders; in England, it is the *curate* who is the *vicar's* subaltern. On this point, there is no doubt about our being in the right, since a curate is a priest, ordained to take charge of a *cure* (the responsible care of souls), whereas a vicar (*vicarius*) is a priest who takes the place of another.

So, you see, that is one to us!

In France, coachmen keep to the right; in England, they keep to the left. The drivers of hansom cabs are seated far from their horses, and are obliged to use very long whips; but, as they keep to the left, the action of the whip takes place in the middle of the road, and thus peaceful promenaders of the pavement are spared many a disagreeable cut.

Well done, John, one to you this time!

The French language possesses the two words *éditer* and *publier;* the English language has to *edit* and to *publish.* But it must be well understood that it is to *publish* which means *éditer*, and to *edit* which means *publier.* These Chinese puzzles, so constantly met with, are not useless, however; they are the delight of French examiners in England, and, of course, the despair of candidates, which is easy to understand, if one considers how much easier it is to be examiner than examined.

How many Frenchmen have I heard laugh at the English for putting an *s* at the end of two great French towns: Lyon and Marseille! Just as if we ourselves had not made London and Dover into *Londres* and *Douvres.* Oh! the mote in the neighbour's eye!

In England, you "get wet to the skin," in France, we "get wet to the bones," and you

know that, when the English go as far as the back-bone, the French, not to be outdone, go as ar as the marrow of the bone.

In England, people are witty "to their fingers' end;" in France, "to the end of their finger nails."

The index is placed at the beginning of English books, but at the end of French ones.

Both the French and English languages have aspirate *h*'s, but whereas in English it is vulgar to drop them, in French it is vulgar to sound them.

In France, it is considered very bad form to call people by their names, directly after being introduced to them. We simply address them as Monsieur, Madame, Mademoiselle. In England, only shopmen address ladies as Madam, or Miss. When you have been introduced, you must add a person's surname to the title to Mr., Mrs., or Miss, in speaking to them.

"When a Frenchman speaks ill of himself," said M. Edouard Pailleron the other day, "do not believe him, he is merely boasting." Nothing is more true than this: but I should be tempted to believe that, when he acts thus, it is from a spirit of opposition, for an Englishman has the reputation . . . . well, if not of hiding his faults, at least of just leaving people to find them out.

The pound sterling contains twenty shillings, the shilling twelve pence, the penny four farthings; and if you want to find out, for instance how much the sum of 356 pounds, 18 shillings, and 9 pence 3 farthings, has brought in, at compound interest, in four years, five months, and eight days, at the rate of $3\frac{7}{10}$ per cent., I would advise you to procure a ream of foolscap paper and set to work. When you have waded through the sum, you will wonder how it is that the English, practical as they are, have not adopted the decimal system. But then, you see, they have adopted it in France.

Even down to the manner of holding a fork or an umbrella, the two nations seem to be saying to each other: "You do it that way? very well, then, I shall do it this way."

In making an inventory of the contrasts in the two nations, it would be difficult to say which is oftener in the right. The balance is probably pretty even.

The last I will mention is the difference in the manner of keeping Good Friday, and in this, I think, the good mark ought to be for us.

Good Friday, being the anniversary of the death of our Saviour, the French keep it in fasting and prayer. On the following Sunday, the day of His

Resurrection, they rejoice. Easter-day, being Sunday, finds the English people plunged in solemn silence; but, on Good Friday, they take their holiday, and the lower orders celebrate their Redeemer's death by knocking down cocoa nuts.

How is it that these two great nations do not understand each other better?

Simply because each judges the other by his own narrow national standard.

Illustrations of this are not wanting.

Let us take modern French literature.

Every educated Englishman is able to read French more or less easily. Yet there are not, in all the United Kingdom, twenty English people able to seize the delicacies of French prose, that light, subtle, sparkling, artistic medium in which you can say anything, touch upon the most ticklish subjects, without fear of offending the most delicate ear. Now how is this French prose judged in England? Why, something after the manner of the street arab, who cries out on beholding the Venus of Milo: "Just look! she's no clothes on! That's a good 'un!" Take a volume of M. Gustave Droz, if you like, that is to say, a sample of our most graceful, coquettish, and lightest literature. Put it into English, and you

will obtain a muddle—half coarse, half stupid, without any kind of flavour or perfume: the aroma has evaporated. Translate such prose into English! As well try to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear.

The Englishman judges us by his own translations.

An important literary paper, in an article upon contemporary French literature, was recently passing in review the battalion of novelists of the modern school. Among other remarks, I read the following phrase; "We know why M. Zola is popular in France." This remark, on the part of the paper, is simply a little piece of gratuitous wickedness. The staff of this learned publication cannot but be aware that in M. Zola's case it is the artist much more than the realist that is admired. The funeral oration that Bossuet delivered over the Duchesse d'Orleans, full of realistic details as it was, and better suited for a dissecting-room than for a Christian pulpit, did not tarnish the glory of that great man. With the French language, many things are possible which in English would be impossible, because the latter tongue lacks suppleness and lightness, and it exposes brutally that which the artist would dissimulate. Everything depends upon the materials used. That same statue, which in Parian marble is perfectly pure, perfectly chaste, in wax would become a repulsive creation.

In literature, as in painting, art can purify anything. The English critics know this perfectly well; but they take care not to say it, when they speak of French fiction. Why? Simply to be able to disparage a neighbour's talent.

But over here, it is necessary, before all things, to obtain the good graces of the "British Matron," Mrs. Grundy. Artists demur, but all the same they are forced to bow to the inexorable fiats of this stiff-starched duenna, and we are not far from the time, when painters of the English school, who wish to paint our first parents in the garden of Eden, will have to array Eve in a high-necked gown, Adam in a bathing suit at least, and their children in pinafores.

Unfortunately, this again will be realism, I am afraid.

No matter; the English Arsinoës will be pacified, and Burlington House will be a serious rival for Madame Tussaud's Exhibition.

We think we are paying a compliment to an Englishman, when we say of him: "He is a typical Englishman, who, by contact with the French, has lost his insular stiffness and acquired that ease of manner which characterises the man of good society, the accomplished gentleman."

It was with a great deal of amusement that I

read, in a Scotch paper, the following remarks upon a Frenchman, who had appeared in public the day before:

"I had been somewhat curious as to what manner of man this Frenchman was, and I now take pleasure in informing those of my readers who did not have an opportunity of judging for themselves, that he is, to use an expressive vulgarism, *a jolly good* fellow. In appearance, he is quite a typical Frenchman. He is a man of dignified aspect, but in manner he has evidently improved by his long residence in England, for there is in him an almost entire absence of that frantic sort of gesticulation, which is popularly attributed to our neighbour Jacques Bonhomme."

Fancy what perfection that Frenchman would arrive at, if he could only live awhile in Scotland!

The English newspapers constantly accuse us of not being able to make a correct English quotation in our writings.

This is what I find in one of the great London dailies of the 23rd of April, 1885, at the beginning of an article on *New Bonnets*.

"The French have a curious expression for conveying the idea of going out without any mantle or cape upon the shoulders—*elle sortait dans sa taille* (she went out in her figure)."

The unfortunate writer evidently meant to say *en taille;* and to help the reader to understand the expression better, he translated it by "she goes out in her figure."

What do you think of it?

But the best is what follows:

"To the ordinary mind, it would appear impossible for her to go out without it."

Here again, I am afraid the writer is under a slight delusion.

When, at the beginning of this century, the English hanged a man for stealing a sheep, when, to this very day, they hang a man for killing in a moment of passion or despair, we almost feel ready to exclaim with Voltaire: "The English are the only people who murder by law."

When, in France, we show a little sympathy with a beautiful and talented woman, a loving and idolised wife, a most tender and devoted mother who kills like a dog an infamous man, who made a living by robbing fair women of a fair name, the English exclaim that the French are so demoralised, so perverted, that they have become upholders of criminals.

When an Englishman's honour, or that of his wife, has been attacked, when an Englishman has been dishonoured by his wife, and he accepts, nay,

he claims, so many pounds damages, which he places to the credit of his banking account; and afterwards invests at five per cent., we think that really he carries the love of money a little too far.

Under the same circumstances, we Frenchmen fight a duel, and the English lift their eyebrows, and say: "What children those Frenchmen are!" And there is some truth in this, for no one would maintain that a bullet in the intestines, or six inches of cold steel through the body, either received or even given, can console a man for the loss of honour, happiness, or reputation.

The antidote to calumny has yet to be discovered; human justice has found no remedy for it. It is very well to talk of magistrates who can send your traducer to prison; but where calumny has struck, it will surely leave its mark, it is Bazile the greatest authority on the subject, who says so. A sword thrust may be healed, but the sting of calumny will poison a long life.

I have no intention of implying that we are better than the English, because we do not accept money as compensation for all wrongs that we may have suffered; but I simply say that a man, who did so, would be immediately shunned by his acquaintances, and he would need to make a friend of his money, for he would soon have no other.

This is why, in certain grave cases, the French-

man can scarcely be blamed for fighting a duel: it is his only solace, not to say, his only vengeance.

To sum up.

What is really distressing is to see two nations often copying each other's absurdities, but shunning to copy each other in that which is sensible, generous, or noble.

The patriotism of these two peoples seems to be a noisy trumpet, often out of tune, whereon each sounds its own praises with a thousand variations, extolling itself at the expense of its neighbour, and apparently thinking, to parody the words of the poet-laureate, that: "Soiling another badly will make one's self nice and clean."

When shall we see geographies cease to be patriotic, and aim at inculcating in children respect for other nations?

When will the histories, used in schools, cease to be sickening records of battles and crimes of all sorts, and when will they teach children something about the march of human intellect and the progress of civilisation?

We all of us—*all* is perhaps rather strong—leave school, knowing that Henry the Eighth of England

had six wives, and that, in the last century, France was governed by Louis XV., who in turn was governed by a laundress.

We all know that Elizabeth had red hair, that James the First's tongue hung out of his mouth, and that Charles the Second was a merry monarch; but is there a single school book that tries to teach us how the English people, governed by a monarch as they are, have come to be the freest nation on the earth? Ah! how learned we should be if we knew the dates of all great discoveries and the names of the benefactors of the human race, as well as we know the dates of great battles and the names of great generals!

In this, the English are as bad as we are. Their geographies devote hundreds of pages to England and its possessions, and dismiss France with two or three pages of more or less contemptuous description. The young Englishman leaves school, wondering in his patriotism how it is that Christopher Columbus, Guttenberg, Luther, and Galileo were not born on British soil. This same young Englishman is taught that England, unaided, beat the French at Malplaquet and Waterloo, that she overcame the Russians in the Crimea, unaided also, and so on. Prince Eugene, General Blücher, and General Pélissier, are represented by x— so many unknown quantities.

I believe there is no country in which so many prejudices exist upon the subject of England as in England itself. That is the result of the education that is provided there.

What is to be concluded from all this? That France and England cannot bear each other? That there never can exist any sympathy or respect between these two mistresses of the world: mistresses by their intellectual power, mistresses by their inexhaustible resources?

I maintain that the hatred of the two people exists only in the feverish brains of a few unscrupulous journalists, who have invented the "nation of bullies" and the "nation of hypocrites," a sensational trade on which they live and thrive, and to whom I might apply the words that M. Renan used in speaking of diplomatists: "I would rather see our poor species confided to the prudence of a band of wild schoolboys than to the diplomacy of diplomatists."

We ought not to be a closed letter to the English, for heaven knows we make no attempt to hide our defects, and I might even add that if we did study to hide them, instead of boasting of them, we

might cut quite as good a figure as the English, *quite.*

We offer ourselves to criticism so unreservedly, owning our shortcomings with such frankness, such *abandon*, that it ill becomes our neighbours to find fault with us. Indeed, we are a nation that confesses with a gay candour that should disarm unkind criticism.

Yes, the foreigner ought to be able to read, as in an open book, that good, warm-hearted, France that he hardly looks at. For him, France is Paris; Paris that supplies him with pleasures for a fortnight, and that he despises when he is satiated. The real France, peaceful and laborious, he knows nothing about beyond what he has seen of it from the windows of a railway carriage.

On arriving at home again, he writes to his friends:

"I have just returned from France. What a country it is! Ah! I have seen pretty sights, I can assure you! I will tell you all about it in private, when we meet. All I can say now is, that I thank God that I was born an Englishman."

And so France has one more enemy.

The Frenchman who comes to London for a week on business, and profits by his visit to go and see the Crystal Palace and Madame Tussaud's Exhibition, returns home and exclaims, parodying two celebrated lines:

"Ah! qu'on est fier d'être Français
Quand on regarde l'Angleterre."

He has looked at England, it is true, but he has not seen it.

To *look* is an action of the body; to *see* is an action of the mind.

No, I maintain that the English do not know France.

They would speak otherwise of it, if for them French life was not the frivolous life of the Boulevards, that is only led, as M. Edouard Pailleron says, by a "ramassis d'hôtes étranges, de toute race, de toute religion, de tout pays—même du nôtre—mais qui n'ont, en réalité, ni pays, ni religion, ni race . . . , qui sont réunis chez nous pour leur amusement ou leur intérêt."

There exists, however, an intelligent Englishman who has studied France as a foreign country should be studied. He was not satisfied with seeing Paris alone. It is probable that he did not try to obtain admission into the drawing-rooms of the Faubourg St. Germain. Good society is good society everywhere, and, with the exception of gossip from its smoking-rooms or boudoirs, which might, perhaps, furnish a few pages of *chronique scandaleuse*, the

observer has little to learn among the aristocracy. It is the people that preserve the traditions of a country: therefore, it is the middle classes, the working classes in town and country, that the observer, as well as the philologist, must turn to.

As the pen of the Englishman in question can hardly be taxed with partiality, I have given, almost in its entirety, in the appendix (A), a letter that he published last year, in one of the large evening papers. In it the English will see their neighbours, described by a countryman of theirs, who has lived long on French soil, not by a Cook's tourist; the French who read it will see that the English, who know them, know how to appreciate them.

Here is the conclusion of his letter:

"In the absence of better reason for retaining it than the wild and random writings of some journalists, Englishmen should dismiss the thought that Jacques Bonhomme hates John Bull."

And if the French want to know whether it is true that John Bull hates Jacques Bonhomme, we are, in this generous and hospitable land, twenty thousand workers, able to tell them that never was a more ridiculous and mischievous falsehood invented on the face of the earth.

When I look around among my friends and acquaintances in professional life, both in France

and England, and think of the kind manner in which I invariably hear France and the French spoken of by Englishmen, and England and her people spoken of by my countrymen, I ask myself, "Where are the haters?"

Sometimes, as I read certain French and English papers, I feel ready to exclaim with Bazile:

"*Qui diable est-ce donc qu'on trompe ici?*"

Are we gone mad or are we doting?

Does anyone believe that such men as Ernest Renan, Louis Pasteur, Ferdinand de Lesseps, Tennyson, Herbert Spencer, Matthew Arnold, Huxley, Tyndall, Ruskin, the masters of science and thought in the two countries that form the vanguard of civilisation, does anyone, I say, imagine that these great men would not be penetrated with the deepest sorrow at the idea of a war being possible between England and France? Is it so desirable to prove that the peaceful populations of these two nations of ants wish for war? If not, why all the insults that certain French papers publish every day with regard to England, and that certain English papers religiously reproduce next morning?

On the occasion of the suppression of the *Bosphore Egyptien* by Nubar Pacha, the Paris correspondent of the *Standard* sent the following lines to his paper:

"There can be no doubt that the public, both here and in London, have been led by the unnecessary strong language of the Press, to attach to the unpleasant affair of the suppression of the *Bosphore Egyptien*, a degree of importance which facts do not warrant."

But, my dear Paris correspondent of the *Standard*—who can write these very sensible lines—how is it that you never lose an opportunity of sending to your paper a translation of every Anglophobist production that is published in Paris? Is it to be in the swim, or to enlighten your countrymen? It certainly cannot be to please your editor, who is one of the most amiable of men, and never speaks of France but with respect and admiration.

Has not the Press a more exalted mission than this? Alas! if it did but follow the advice that was given, not long since to his compatriots, by M. Cassal, late representative at the Assembly of 1848, Professor in the University of London, the learned and warm-hearted patriot whom we have just lost. This is what he said to us on the 2nd of January of the present year:

"It behoves us to cement respect and esteem between these two races, who in spite of their past, and in spite of clashing interests, are formed to respect and esteem, and even to love each other, were it only on account of their contrasts. It

behoves us to find the points of attraction and contact possible between these two characters, so noble, honest, and true; so ardent in their love of justice and liberty, and in their efforts to further the progress of the human race. This is our first duty."

Such was the advice given by a patriot, whom thirty-eight years of English life had not, however, Anglicised. We, who know the virtues as well as the failings of England, have no need of the opinions of a few journalists in search of sensational news.

What a pity it is that two regiments cannot be formed, one in the Faubourg Montmartre, the other in Fleet Street.* Then, perhaps, the bellicose parties might be induced to go and fight it out to their heart's content, on some neutral spot in the distance—say Jericho.

* See Appendix (B).

VI.

TIT FOR TAT.

I HAVE tried to show how the two countries seem to have set themselves the task of differing from each other as much as possible. I shall attempt to show, farther on, how our so-called intelligent classes, in France, carefully avoid adopting that English system of education, which is founded upon confidence and liberty—in the family as well as in the school-room. I have shown elsewhere how careless the English labouring classes, especially those of the large towns, are of the future; and of the contrast they form to the French working classes, so intelligent, sober and economical. Laugh at the French workman for his outrageous love for politics, if you will; but, at all events, he is a man, who has visited the museums of his country, who can whistle a few tunes from most of the operas, and has his favourite actors on the boards of the Boulevard theatres; jealous of his reputation for being a good workman, he is an

artist, when compared to the bungler that the English have surnamed *British Workman*, two words which they cannot pronounce without a smile.

Now, I should also like to show, that the two nations in question seem to be as ambitious of imitating each other in everything that is ridiculous, as they are of differing from each other in everything that is sensible.

Let our "mashers" get themselves up in the style of English grooms, and deck themselves in huge checks as much as they like; let English ladies whose simplicity of dress used to be proverbial, dress their heads *à la Chinoise*, if it please them so to do; these fashions, if ridiculous, are but fleeting, the harmless whims of a season.

But when one sees two languages, transformed into a jargon, an Anglo-French gibberish, one wonders whether it is a sign of definite *rapprochement* between the two countries, or a homage each wishes to render the other. I fear it is only a race, and that it would be difficult to decide which of the two is the more ridiculous.

Languages have this in common with many mortals: when they borrow they do not return. This is perhaps a happy thing, for when borrowed words do get returned, good heavens!—what a state they come home in!

We thought we were doing a fine thing in taking the words *ticket*, *jockey*, *budget*, *tunnel*, *fashion* from the English. They are, however, but French words mutilated, and there is not much to be proud of in re-acquiring them. The English had borrowed of us *étiqueter*, *jacquet* (*petit Jacques*), *bougette* (*the king's privy purse*), *façon*. Better they had kept them. Up to the nineteenth century, it was by reason of war and conquest that both conquerors and conquered saw their vocabularies invaded by foreign words; but is it not strange that in the nineteenth century, the century of civilisation, so-called, peace between England and France should bring about such a disastrous result?

Formerly we used to *déjeuner*.

Nous avons changé tout cela: nowadays *nous lunchons*. *Nous lunchons!* What a barbarous mouthful, is it not?

The word *déjeuner*, signifying "to cease fasting," or, as the English say, "to breakfast," it is wrongly used in speaking of a second repast. *Déjeuner* is, therefore, irrational; but is this any excuse for making ourselves grotesque?

But, my dear compatriots, we are avenged. I read in the *Standard* of the 30th of June 1885:

"Prince Albert Victor was yesterday admitted to the freedom of the City of London. . . . . The

royal party and a large company of invited guests were afterwards entertained at a *déjeuner* in the Guildhall, the Lord Mayor presiding."

Now that the French *lunch*, the English will *déjeuner*, more than ever, of course.

Parisian good society no longer takes tea, it "five o'clocks"; and the *bourgeois* is beginning to put at the foot of his cards of invitation:

"*On five o'clockera à neuf heures.*"

When the English wish to have a song or a piece of music repeated by an artist, they shout: *Encore!* And, the following day, the papers, in their accounts of the performance, announce that Mademoiselle So-and-So was *encored.*

While I am upon this subject, allow me to give you a little sample of modern English; it will prove to you that Alexander Dumas was right,* when he pronounced English to be only French badly pronounced, and I would add, badly spelt:

"The *concert* was *brilliant*, and the *ensemble excellent.* Miss N. was *encored*, but Mr. D., who made his *début*, only obtained a *succès d'estime.*"

Go to Trafalgar Square. Place yourself at the foot of that long Roman candle, on the summit of which the statue of Nelson may be perceived . . .

* See Appendix (C).

on a clear day. Turn towards the Palace of Westminster, and you will see on your left the *Grand Hôtel* and the *Avenue Theatre*, on your right the *Hôtel Métropole*. In your rear you will find the *National Gallery*. As all these buildings are within a hundred yards of Charing Cross station, the terminus at which you alight on coming from France, your first impression will be that it will not take you long to learn to speak English. Ah! dear compatriots, be not deceived; you little guess the terrible perfidiousness of that language. Those provoking Britons seem to have taken a wicked pleasure in inventing a collection of unheard of sounds, a pronunciation that will fill your hearts with despair, and that puts them quite out of the reach of imitation.

Thou mayest dress like an Englishman, dear compatriot, eat roast beef like an Englishman, but, never, never wilt thou speak English like an Englishman. Thou wilt always massacre his language; let this console thee for hearing him massacre thine.

In the *Spectator* of the 8th of September, 1711, Addison wrote:

"I have often wished, that as in our Constitution there are several persons whose business it is to watch over our laws, our liberties, and commerce, certain men might be set apart as superin-

tendents of our language, to hinder any words of a foreign coin from passing among us; and, in particular, to prohibit any French phrases from becoming current in this kingdom, when those of our stamp are altogether as valuable. The present war has so adulterated our tongue with strange words, that it would be impossible for one of our grandfathers to know what his posterity have been doing, were he to read their exploits in a modern newspaper."

O Addison, stop thy ears, and veil thy face!

M. Hippolyte Cocheris, the learned French philologist, quotes, in one of his writings, a piece of prose from an aristocratic pen, which appeared in No. 116 of the *New Monthly*. It runs as follows:

"I was *chez moi*, inhaling the *odeur musquée* of my scented *boudoir*, when the Prince of Z—— entered. He found me in my *demi-toilette blasée sur tout*, and pensively engaged in solitary conjugation of the verb *s'ennuyer*, and though he had never been one of my *habitués*, or by any means *des nôtres*, I was not inclined at this moment of *délassement* to glide with him into the *crocchio ristretto* of familiar chat."

To edify his readers, and make them appreciate this little master-piece of hybrid style at its due value, M. Cocheris proceeds to translate the piece

into French, carefully replacing all the words in italics by English ones, thus:

"J'étais *at home*, aspirant la *musky smell* de mon *private room*, lorsque le Prince de Z—entra. Il me trouva en simple *dress*, *fatigued with everything*, tristement occupée à conjuguer le verbe *to be weary*, et quoique je ne l'eusse jamais compté au nombre de mes *intimates*, et qu'il ne fût, en aucune façon *of our set*, j'étais assez disposée à entrer avec lui dans le *crocchio restretto* d'une causerie familière."

At the Congress of the National Society of French Teachers in England, held in London in the month of January, 1884, a witty friend and *confrère* added the following remarks:

"M. H. Cocheris maintains that a French author would never dare to have recourse to such a literary proceeding. Nonsense! Read our novels, read our newspapers. At every page, you find mention made of *fashionables* in *knickerbockers*, who, dressed in *ulsters*, repair to the *turf* in a *dog-cart* with a *groom* and a *bull-dog*. They bring up at a *bar* and eat a slice of *pudding* or a *sandwich*, washed down with a bowl of *punch* or a *cock-tail*. These gentlemen have the *spleen*, in spite of the *comfortable* life they lead. In the evening, they go and applaud the *humour* of

a *clown*, and call *snobs* those who prefer the *Comédie Française*."

If this picture of the state of things be really a true one, the French Academy had better lower its blinds and burn tapers.

VII.

PHARISEES AND CROCODILES.

THE French and the English have this very characteristic feature in common: they can stand any amount of incense; you may burn all the perfumes of Arabia under their noses, without incommoding them in the slightest degree.

With this difference, however, in the extremes.

The French boaster is noisy and talkative. With his moustache twirled defiantly upwards, his hat on one side, he will shout at you, at the top of his voice that, * *La "France, Monsieur, sera toujours*

* If my memory serves me, it was one of our wittiest vaudevillists who once laid a wager that he would get an encore, at one of our popular theatres on the Boulevard, for the following patriotic quatrain:

"La lâcheté ne vaut pas la vaillance,
Mille revers ne font pas un succès;
La France, amis, sera toujours la France,
Les Français seront toujours les Français."

He won the bet.

The London *badauds* are at present nightly applauding, at

la Fr-r-rance, les Français seront toujours les Fr-r-rançais." As you listen to him, you are almost tempted to believe, with Thackeray, "that the poor fellow has a lurking doubt in his own mind that he is not the wonder he professes to be."

But allow me to say that the British specimen is far more provoking. He is so thoroughly persuaded of his superiority over the rest of the human race; it is, in his eyes, such an incontested and incontestable fact, that he does not think it worth his while to raise his voice in asserting it. He has not a doubt that the whole world was made for him: the Italians to give him concerts, the French to dig the Suez Canal for him, the Germans to sweep out his offices and do his errands in the City for £20 a year, the Greeks to grow the principal ingredient in his plum-pudding. His face beams with gratitude and complacency, as he quietly rubs his hands

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the Empire Theatre, a patriotic song, which begins by the following words:

> "What though the powers the world doth hold,
> Were all against us met,
> We have the might they felt of old,
> And England's England yet."

Is it not strange that music hall jingoism and *chauvinisme* should not only be expressed in the same manner but by the very same words?

together, and calmly thanks Heaven that he is not as other men are. And it is true enough: he is not.

"Dear brother reader," says Thackeray, "answer as a man of honour. Do you think a Frenchman your equal? You don't, you gallant British snob, you know you don't. . . . . O my country! if I were a Frenchman, how I would hate you!"

There is one great difference between our two boasters: the Englishman will seek, on all occasions, to appear a trifle better than he really is—he never runs himself down; but the Frenchman, on the contrary, is a braggart of vice. To hear him joke about matrimony, you would take him for a libertine. To listen to some of the plays that he will applaud, to see the caricatures that amuse him, you might come to the conclusion that, in his eyes, marriage was not a sacred tie. But do not form your conclusions too hastily. Those jokes, that delight him, are often in very doubtful taste, I admit; but they are jokes and nothing more, and if you were to take the plays and caricatures for real pictures of French life, you would be making as great a mistake as you could well make.

Now, a Frenchman, who had given an appointment to his wife, would be apt to take on a little

look of mystery as he hurried away from a friend in the street, with the words: "Excuse my haste, I must leave you: I have an appointment." And if you heard the response, "Ah! you rascal, I'll tell your wife," accompanied by a knowing shake of the head, you might rashly take the pair for a couple of reprobates. But once more you would be wrong. Such harmless trivialities—for trivialities they must be called—are indulged in by men who are the honour and joy of their homes.

We hide our virtues and do not like to be reproached with them. On this subject I might tell an anecdote which, if venerable, is none the less amusing.

The *Athenæum*, a paper written by the *élite* of the literary, scientific, and artistic worlds, was at a loss to know, not long since, why almost all the heroes of French novels were engineers. The reason is that French engineers are all ex-pupils of the Polytechnic School. I mean the engineers of mines, roads and bridges. These young men, having passed their youth in study, in order to prepare for the most difficult examination we have, naturally have the reputation of being steady. The anecdote is this: Edmond About one day wrote: "Virtuous as a Polytechnician." The sentence displeased the young mathematicians, and they promptly took the author of it to task.

I forget the exact words of their reply, but it ran, as nearly as I can recollect:

"Dear Sir,—Please to speak of what you know something about. We are no more virtuous than you."

I dedicate this anecdote to the English: I do not think it is known to them.

Call a Frenchman a "good father" or "good citizen," he will smile and probably answer back, "You humbug!" Yet he *is* a good father and a good citizen, and he used to be a good *garde-national*, notwithstanding his objection to be told so. He proved it during the siege of Paris, although his wife had never been able to look at him in his uniform without laughing.

Now, if the Englishman, who ornaments his buttonhole with a piece of blue ribbon, does not put on two pieces more to proclaim *urbi et orbi* that he is a good father and a good citizen, it is because the idea never occurred to him—for nobody doubts that, like his neighbour, he, too, is a good father and a good citizen.

Observe the dear neighbours in their language. An Englishman who had called a Frenchman Mr. So-and-So would quickly correct himself and say *Monsieur* instead. Why? Simply because,

in his eyes, it is necessary to be *correct* before all things.

Why do we French never employ the imperfect tense of the subjunctive of verbs of the first conjugation, when we can avoid it?

Because it is discordant, you will say.

Yet we do not fear to use the words *tracasse*, *bêtasse*, etc. Certainly such expressions as *que je tracassasse*, *que nous fricassassions*, are discordant and barbarous; but I do not know that *parlasse* is any more discordant than *carcasse* or *crevasse*. No, we avoid employing this imperfect tense because it is pedantic and showy. If we said to someone: "*Voudriez-vous que je lui parlasse!*" we should be afraid of appearing to wish to call attention to our knowledge of our subjunctive rules. We wish to be correct, but we do not care to call attention to our knowledge, so we leave the imperfect of the subjunctive to national schoolmasters.

Ah! I say once more, if we only knew how to hide our faults as we can hide our virtues, what a respectable figure we could cut by the side of our neighbours!

The English hypocrite is the hypocrite of virtue and religion. English novelists have exposed him,

but have not succeeded in extinguishing him: the Chadbands, the Stigginses, the Podsnaps, the Pecksniffs, all the saintly British *tartufes* are as flourishing as ever.

Molière could, in his times, put on the stage such a man as Tartufe; at the present day the type is extinct; the religious hypocrite would not go down in France; the character is exploded.

Pecksniff, one of the most powerful creations of Dickens, a photograph from the life, had named his two daughters, Mercy and Charity.* In France, this worthy father and the Misses Mercy and Charity would find every door shut in their faces. This kind of vocation would lead straight to the workhouse.

It is not that we have no hypocrites, however. We keep the article, but it is of a different pattern.

The French hypocrite is the hypocrite of sentiment—the crocodile.

It is natural enough that it should be so.

The hypocrite does but force the characteristic

* There is this good thing about England, that if you wish to call the hope of your family Nebuchadnezzar, there is nothing to prevent you. In France, you must restrict your choice to the calendar, and content yourself with Adolphe or Isidore.

note of his race. The English are religious, the French sentimental; therefore, the English hypocrite is the hypocrite of religion, and the French hypocrite the hypocrite of sentiment.

The former will enter into conversation with you by expressing a hope that you do not concern yourself too much with the things of this world. Chadband presents himself at the house of a friend with the salutation: "Peace be upon this house." Then, seeing the table garnished with good things, he cries: "My friends, why must we eat? To live. And why must we live? To do good. It is then right that we should eat. Therefore, let us partake of the good things which are set before us." Thereupon he gorges himself, that he may be able the better to support life, and do the more good. No French novelist would dare portray such a personage in his books.

The French hypocrite proceeds differently. He makes professions of friendship for you, embraces you, enters into your woes with touching displays of feeling; when occasion seems to require, he can shed a few tears, his lachrymal gland is inexhaustible. As he takes his departure, he "hopes things will soon look brighter," and offers you a cigar.

It is at the funeral of a good bequeathing uncle that he is especially edifying. He follows, with staggering steps, the remains of the beloved

defunct; he is literally supported to the grave by the two friends on whose arms he leans. Tears trickle down his cheeks, he is pale and exhausted. His handkerchief has a wide black border, but smells of musk. He tells you, with sobs, that his uncle was a father to him, and begs you to excuse him, if he finds it impossible to master his grief.

On arriving home, he writes to his upholsterer to order new furniture.

The two kinds of hypocrisy, one as loathsome as the other, are clearly manifested even in the criminals of the two countries.

The English prisoner at the bar is not submitted to examination, and thus the public is spared his professions of faith; but the letters he writes to his friends, and to which the newspapers generally give publicity, show him in his true light. "He believes in God; he knows that Heaven will not fail to confound the infernal machinations of the wretches who accuse him."

The French criminal makes professions of sentiment in the dock.

I extract the following lines from the trial of the vile assassins of poor Madame Ballerich.

"*Q.* You loitered about the house and asked Madame Ballerich for a fictitious person, in order to take stock of the premises, did you not?

"*A.* I do not deny that I meant to commit a theft, but a crime was far from my thoughts. A crime is going too far; I would not dishonour my family; I swear it by my mother.

"*Q.* You struck the fatal blow that killed the victim. When you left she was still alive?

"*A.* I did not look to see whether Madame Ballerich was dead. It is bad enough to be mixed up at all in affairs of that kind! It made me feel sick to see the blood. I suffered internally; I was struck with remorse and repentance."

The English assassin, on mounting the scaffold, generally gives his friends *rendezvous* in the better land, and implores his Maker's pardon. The French murderer implores the pardon of his mother.

At this solemn moment both of them probably cease to be hypocrites.

VIII.

SOCIAL FAILURES.

THE French social failure is generally a radical. If he had cared to do, as plenty of others do (and seeing you prosperous, he accompanies this with an expressive glance), if he had cared to intrigue and curry favour, he too could have cut a figure in the world. But unhappily for himself, he does not know how to disguise his opinions; he is, according to the formula, poor but honest.

It is his pride that leads him to avoid the lucky ones of the earth; he has no desire to be taken for a schemer. If he has lost all else, honour still is left, and this, his only remaining treasure, he intends to preserve intact.

He despises money, and if he does not return that little loan he borrowed of you, it is because he presumes that your contempt for filthy lucre is equal to his own.

Yet the sight of a sovereign melts him, and there flits across his face a smile of satisfaction,

mingled, however, with a tinge of sadness at the thought of being caught capitulating with the enemy. But to convince himself that he has lost none of his independence of character, he goes straightway and says evil of you, so that no man shall say of him that he was corrupted by the loan of a paltry coin.

You will generally find that he has been bankrupt once or twice; but as that has not made a rich man of him, you conclude that, if he has not a great love of money, neither has he a great talent for business.

He lays his poverty at every one's door but his own. Society does not understand him. He shall go to his grave without having had a chance of revealing himself to the world. Meanwhile he opens a general agency. Not having been successful with his own affairs, he hopes to have better luck with other people's.

As a rule, you find that he has married a servant or a laundress, "to pay a debt he owed to Society," as he puts it. But Society, who is but a thankless jade, turns her back upon him and his wife. Never mind, he has done his duty. Upon this point he finds nothing to reproach himself with. Some men marry for money; thank Heaven, he is not one of that sort.

Let anything you undertake prove a success,

and you will hear him say that he had thought of doing it long ago: it was only his idea stolen from him. But there's the rub; what is the use of ideas, when one has no capital?

He occasionally talks of committing suicide, of throwing himself into the sea; but this idea of his has been stolen so many times over that he gives it up in disgust.

When he does die, it will be of spite.

You will survive the loss of him without difficulty.

His presence is a hair in your soup, a crumb in your bed.

The French specimen keeps a spark of facetiousness through all his misfortunes.

About ten years ago, I was talking one day with a Frenchman, who had been established in England some time. *Established!* I am getting facetious too, you see.

I was erroneously maintaining to him that imprisonment was still inflicted in England for debt.

"You are mistaken, I can assure you," said he.

"I do not think so," I replied.

"Imprisonment for debt was abolished two years ago."

"Are you quite sure?" said I, seeing him so positive.

"*Parbleu!* I ought to know better than you," he said. "I was the last to come out."

THE English specimen is much more humble than his like in France, for the simple reason that, on the other side of the Channel, poverty is no crime, while over here it is. Apart from this the two types do not differ much.

In the commercial world, the English social failure is an agent of some sort: generally wine or coal. In the exercise of his calling, he requires no capital, nor even a cellar. He not unfrequently entitles himself *General Agent*: this, when the wreck is at hand. Such are the straws he clutches at; if they should break, he sinks, and is heard of no more, unless his wife come to the rescue, by setting up a lodging-house or a boarding-school for young ladies. There, once more in smooth water, he wields the blacking-brush, makes acquaintance with the knife-board, or gets in the provisions. In allowing himself to be kept by his wife, he feels he loses some dignity, but if she should adopt any airs of superiority over him, he can always bring her to a sense of duty by beating her.

In the republics of art and letters, you generally find him playing the part of critic, consoling himself for his failures by abusing the artists who sell their pictures, or the authors who sell their books.

For these he knows no pity. He can all the more easily abuse his dear brethren of the quill or brush, that he has not to sign his invectives: his prose is anonymous. Once a week, in the columns of some penny paper, he can, with perfect impunity, relieve his heart of the venom it contains.

The mud he scatters has one good quality—it does not stain; one fillip . . . . and it is gone.

Here is a sample of this kind of production. I extract it from a paper as pretentious as it is little read:

"The fortunate writer woke up one morning to find himself famous, and his book on a tide of popularity which carried it, in one year, through some fifty editions. A grand stroke of this kind ensures the ambition to repeat it. . . . . His new book bears throughout manifest evidences of having been scrambled through, and put together anyhow, in order to recapture the notice *and the money of the public.*"

Now Carlyle, who was very sensitive to adverse criticism, used to call these revengeful failures in literature "dirty puppies," and it was kind of him to so far notice them.

But if I were the author in question, an answer somewhat in the following style would rise to my pen:

"My dear Sir,

"I admire your independence and your contempt for the money and the favours of the public. But one question I would ask of you: Why do you send your invectives to the wrong address? If I am famous, as you are pleased to say, without believing it any more than myself, do not lay the blame upon me, my dear sir; lay it rather upon that 'fool of a public' who is silly enough to prefer my scribblings to your *chefs-d'œuvre*. Not for the world would I say anything that might be disagreeable to you, but I would fain remind you that, ever since the days of Horace, the authors of books that sell have never been appreciated by the authors of the books that do not."

The bitterness of Mr. Tommy Hawk's criticisms forms a curious contrast with the fairness and good-nature of the serious English critic.

The latter possesses a large stock of good sense, good taste, learning and independence. He can blend counsel and encouragement, and he has a conscience; that is to say, as much aversion to disparaging as to flattering. The same author whom he praised yesterday because his work was worthy of praise, he blames to-day because his work is deserving of blame: he is no respecter of persons.

Criticism should be taken with thanks and deference, if fair and kind; with deference and no thanks, if fair but unkind; with silence and contempt, if insulting and unfair.

So says d'Alembert.

May I now permit myself to indulge in a little personality?

Mr. George Augustus Sala, the wittiest and best humoured of English journalists, in one of his interesting *Echoes of the Week*, not long ago accused a book of my own, after paying it one or two compliments, of being as full of blunders as an egg is full of meat.

Mr. Sala, with his knowledge of London and its dairy produce, I am sure meant to pay me a delicate compliment.

IX.

MAL DE MER.

To think that these poor neighbours should not be able to pay each other a visit without first making acquaintance with the *mal de mer!* To think that this must be the last impression that each one takes home with him!

The *mal de mer!* That uninteresting complaint which awakes no pity in the breast of man!

The sky is serene, a light breeze gently fans your cheek, the water in the harbour is as smooth as a sheet of glass. You timidly ask the first sailor you come across a question or two as to the weather and the outlook for the passage—not for your own reassurance, for *you* are a pretty good sailor, but . . . . for a friend, or . . . . for a lady who is travelling with you, and who suffers dreadfully from sea-sickness. The sly fellow sees through your little ruse, and answers, with a serio-

comic look: "The sea, sir! like a lake, sir.; like a lake."

You feel reassured. You say to yourself: "Well, this time, at all events, we shall have a good passage;" and you cheerily pace the deck, light of heart and firm of foot, convinced that if anyone is ill, it will not be you.

The illusion is a sweet, but short-lived one.

The whistle sounds, the boat is set in motion, and gently and smoothly glides to the mouth of the harbour.

Everyone seems in the best of spirits, people chatter in groups, and handkerchiefs are waved to the friends who have come down to the quay to see you off.

The end of the pier is passed. There you are —now for it. You have hardly rounded the projection which would be for you a little Cape of Good Hope, if you were only arriving instead of departing, when the horrible construction heaves heavily forward, and then seems to sink away from under your feet, making you feel as if it were about to leave you in mid-air, and trust to your intelligence to catch it again. You would fain make your escape without delay; but everybody is there, so you hold on and look around. Little by little the faces grow serious; they begin to pale and lengthen visibly; the groups melt

and gradually disperse. Everyone finds a pretext for going below and hiding his shame.

"I am not generally ill on the water," you remark to your neighbour; "but to-day, I don't know why, I am not feeling quite up to the mark; I must have eaten something at luncheon that does not agree with me. . . . . Oh! of course, it's that wretched lobster salad! I was cautioned not to touch it, too. Oh! *la gourmandise!*" Confident of having persuaded your travelling companion that you are a tolerably good sailor, you too disappear below . . . . and he, not sorry to see you go, is not long in following your example.

You go down to the cabin. Alas! that is the finishing touch. The stuffy, heavy, unwholesome atmosphere, charged with a mixed odour of tar, mysterious cookery, and troubled stomachs, brings your digestive apparatus up to your throat. You feel stifled. All the vital forces crowd to your head, and your legs are powerless to support you. You throw yourself on your berth like a log, and instinctively close your eyes, so as not to see that man over there, who is just about to open the ball, or that other who is looking at you with a mixture of amusement and pity, as he calmly eats his chop. This creature is the most annoying of all your fellow-passengers. His compassion for you is insulting. You hate his healthy-looking

face, his calm, his good appetite even; and your indignation reaches its climax when you see him coolly filling his pipe and preparing to go on deck and smoke. Unable to endure the atmosphere of the saloon any longer, you make a grand effort and return to the upper regions. The first sight that meets your eyes is that man again, now lavishing the most careful attentions upon your wife; he has been to fetch her some brandy and water, or a cup of tea. You would thank him, but you do not care for your wife to see you in your pitiful condition. That fellow is unbearable, overpowering. This is the only reflection suggested by his kindness to your wife; and away you steer, making a semi-circle, or rather two or three, on your way to an empty bench, where you once more assume the horizontal.

A friend comes to tell you that your wife is giving up the ghost somewhere in the stern of the ship, but you make believe not to hear, and only murmur through your teeth: "So am I; what can I do for her?"

You ask the steward to send you some tea, and it comes up in an earthenware basin an inch thick. You put it to your lips. Horrible! What can it possibly be made of, this nauseating decoction? The smell of the flat, unpalatable stuff makes you feel more qualmish than ever: the remedy is worse than the evil.

Just as, at Monaco, you never fail to come across a gambler, who has his system, you rarely take a sea journey without meeting with the good soul who has an infallible preventative for sea-sickness. "This succeeds with nine persons out of ten," she tells you. Next time you cross, you try it, but only to find that you are evidently *the tenth*. However, it is not a failure or two that can shake the blind confidence she has in her remedy, I must say it to her credit.

Though there exists no cure for this strange evil, I think, notwithstanding, that by the exercise of a little self-control, one can retard the catastrophe. At least such is my experience.

We were one day between Guernsey and Southampton, just near the Casquettes, where the Channel makes things very uncomfortable for you, if there is the least wind blowing. I had curled myself up in a corner, in the stern of the boat and was preparing to feel very sadly. Up come two French ladies, appearing, like myself, to have strayed that way in search of solitude.

"*Saperlotte*," thought I, "here are women looking at you, my boy; be a man."

I fixed my eyes on a point of the horizon, and no doubt appeared to my neighbours to be plunged in profound contemplation.

The ladies took up their position not very far from me, and began to heave very heavy sighs. I looked at them. They were green.

"Ah! Monsieur!" said one of them to me, "how fortunate you are not to be ill!"

I was saved, for the moment at all events. It put fresh strength into me. Forcing a smile, and gathering up my courage, I had the impudence to affirm that I felt pretty well. The effort of the will had the power to keep the evil in check.

At that moment I understood how you can make a hero of a frightened soldier by telling him that bravery is written in his eyes.

A man who crosses the Channel several times a year is pretty sure to have one or two little anecdotes of the *mal de mer*, and its consequences, in a corner of his memory.

Here is one chosen at random.

It was between Boulogne and Folkestone, on a *mare contrarium*.

Seated quietly on deck, I was just dozing over a book, the author of which I will not name, since his volume had less power over my senses than the rolling of the boat. I was presently brought back to consciousness by the weight of a head, laid on my shoulder. I opened my eyes, looked out of

the corners of them: the head was a very pretty one, upon my word.

What was I to do?

To stay would be compromising; to get away suddenly would be ungallant and perhaps not without danger, for the poor little head might fall against the bulwarks of the boat. I reclosed my eyes, and made believe not to have noticed anything. All at once I heard a sweet voice in my ear:

"Oh! Arthur! What shall I do?" If you only knew how sick I feel. Oh! I must lean my head on your shoulder; you don't mind, do you?"

The situation was getting alarming. I kept my eyes closed, so as not to scare away the poor creature who was evidently at sea, in more senses than one. I kept quiet, buried in my wraps and travelling cap, and, without moving my head, just murmured, "I am really awfully sorry, madam, but I am not Arthur."

This was startling enough in all conscience. I quite expected a small explosion: apologies, little screams, a fainting fit, perhaps. Happily, however, on board ship, dignity is laid aside. Certainly, on dry land, this lady could not have done less than faint, if it were only for the sake of appearances. But *à la mer, comme à la mer.*

So there was no fuss or fainting: for that matter my poor fellow-traveller had not the strength

to move. I rosé, helped her to assume a more comfortable position, placed a cushion under her head, and covered her with my rug. Then, having called the steward and recommended Madame Arthur to his care, there remained nothing but to decamp, and quit the thankless *rôle* of caretaker of somebody else's wife.

When we got into harbour at Folkestone, Arthur suddenly made his appearance from somewhere in the lower regions. He was my very double—the same size, the same dress. . . . . I saw through the misadventure.

On joining the London train, I found myself in the same compartment as the young couple. Arthur *knew all*, as they say in sensational novels, and we had a hearty laugh together over the affair. Arthur was as gay as a lark. I attributed his mirth to the fact of his having left the sea behind, and to his finding himself once more on *terra firma* with his beloved one. I found in the course of conversation that he had only been married the day before, and the happy pair had come over to hide their bliss in the fogs. They intended passing their honeymoon in London. It would have been sacrilege. I dissuaded them from their project, and induced them to go to Scotland, to see its lakes and mountains, and the bracken lit up with autumnal gold.

X.

HUMOUR, WIT, AND HIBERNIANISM.

HUMOUR is a subtle, witty, and gently satirical form of gaiety that is oftener met with among English-speaking races than elsewhere.

Humour has not the brilliancy, the vivacity of French wit, but it is more graceful, lighter, and above all more philosophic. A sarcastic element is nearly always present in it, and not unfrequently a vein of sadness. There is something deliciously quiet and deliberate about humour, that is in perfect harmony with the English character; and we have been right in adopting the English name for the thing, seeing that the thing is essentially English.

Germany has produced humorists, among whom Hoffmann and Henry Heine shine conspicuously; but this kind of playful raillery is not to be met with in French literature, except perhaps in the *Lettres provinciales* of Pascal.

In France, irony is presented in a more lively

form. Swift and Sterne are the acknowledged masters of British humour, as Rabelais and Voltaire are the personification of French wit.

British humour does not evaporate so quickly as French wit; you feel its influence longer. The latter takes you by storm, but humour lightly tickles you under the ribs, and quietly takes possession of you by degrees; the bright idea, instead of being laid bare, is subtly hidden: it is only after you have peeled off the coating of sarcasm lying on the surface, that you get at the fun underneath. Here is an example: Mark Twain thus describes the town of Civita Vecchia:

"Civita Vecchia is the finest nest of dirt and ignorance we have found yet, except that African perdition they call Tangier, which is just like it. The people here live in alleys two yards wide, which have a smell about them which is peculiar but not entertaining. It is well the alleys are not wider, because they hold as much smell now as a person can stand, and of course, if they were wider they would hold more, and then the people would die.* These alleys are paved with stone, and carpeted with deceased cats, and decayed rags, and decomposed vegetable-tops, and remnants of old boots, all soaked with dish-water, and the people sit around on stools and enjoy it."

* This joke is really a mild Hibernianism.

Then he adds:

"They are indolent, as a general thing, and yet have few pastimes. They work two or three hours at a time, but not hard, and then they knock off and catch flies. This does not require any talent, because they only have to grab; if they do not get the one they are after, they get another. It is all the same to them; they have no partialities: whichever they get is the one they want.

"They have other kinds of insects: but it does not make them arrogant; they are very quiet, unpretending people."

This is humour. The last sentence is a little master-piece in its way.

I BELIEVE Parisian wit might be correctly described as a sudden perception and expression of a likeness in the unlike. Here is an example of it: an English one:

Sidney Smith, the most Parisian wit England has produced, one day asked the Corporation of the City of London to pave St. Paul's Churchyard with wood. The Corporation replied that such a thing was perfectly impracticable.

"Not at all, gentlemen, I assure you," cried

Sidney Smith; "you have only to lay all your heads together, and the thing is done."

THAT kind of wit, peculiar to the Irish, and commonly called Hibernianism, is an apparent congruity in things essentially incongruous. In fact, it expresses what is apparently rational, but in reality utterly irrational.

Thus, when an Irishman was told that one of Dr. Arnott's patent stoves would save half the usual fuel, he exclaimed to his wife: "Arrah! thin I'll buy two and save it all, my jewel."

This was apparently logical, since $2 \times \frac{1}{2} = 1$.

We have nothing in French wit that can properly be compared to Hibernianism, except perhaps the *gasconnade* at times, but in the *gasconnade* there is no humour, the essence of it is exaggeration.

I one day, in an examination, put the following question to a young Irishman: "Why, in the sentence *nous nous sommes rappelé ces choses*, is the past participle *rappelé* invariable?"

"Because in that phrase the accusative is in the dative," he promptly replied.

Yet the young Hibernian was in the full possession of his mental faculties, and I translated his

conundrum thus: "In the compound tenses of reflective verbs, the reflective pronoun is generally in the accusative; but, in this particular case, this pronoun is in the dative, and therefore the past participle does not agree with it."

The answer of my young candidate is another example of what the English call a Hibernianism.

"You often forget to close the shutters of the ground-floor rooms at night," an Irishman would say to his servant; "one of these fine mornings I shall wake up murdered in my bed." I do not know that friend Paddy has ever perpetrated this one, but he is quite capable of it.

The Hibernianism is one of the forms of laziness of the mind, but is not at all a proof of stupidity. On the contrary, all those jokes that the English are fond of putting to the credit of the Irish, are only the proof of a certain overflow of intelligence, two ideas issuing simultaneously from the brain, and getting confused into one. Dissect a Hibernianism, and you will generally find two ideas, perfectly sensible, but not agreeing together.

I have met with just as many noodles in England as elsewhere. But among all the Irish that I have come across, though some have been lazy, and many have been bunglers, I have not yet met one who was not intelligent, amiable, and witty.

While on this subject, I might remind the

English of the remark made not long ago by their celebrated critic, John Ruskin, at Oxford: "English jokes are often tame, but there is always wit at the bottom of an Irish bull."

And we might add:

Burke, the greatest English orator that ever lived, was an Irishman. Excuse, I beg, this Hibernianism of mine.

Lord Dufferin, that ambassador, and Lord Wolseley, that *only* general, whom England has been serving for the past few years, roast, baked, and boiled, to her friends and foes alike, the two saviours to whom she invariably turns when anything is going wrong . . . . or is wanted to go wrong, are sons of Erin.

Goldsmith, the immortal author of the "Vicar of Wakefield," was Irish.

Sheridan, the author of the "School for Scandal," that the English might almost call their *only* comedy, was Irish.

Jonathan Swift and Richard Steele were Irish.

The names of Ireland's great men would fill a long list.

One might almost say that all that is most delicate and most witty in English literature is of Irish origin.

When we have added that the Duke of Wellington was an Irishman, perhaps we shall have

succeeded in showing that England is very far yet from having paid her little debt of gratitude to Ireland.

Quod erat demonstrandum.

XI.

A DEAD ANGLOPHOBIST AND A RED GALLOPHOBIST.

THE Anglophobist of the purest water that France ever produced, was the late Marquis de Boissy, senator of the second Empire. This witty, eloquent, spirited old Gaul, was the soul of the august assembly, the only member of it who was not either stuffed or embalmed, and his memory alone will save it from oblivion. His philippics will long ring in the ears of the French.

Whether he was in the tribune, treating the subject of home or foreign politics, or whether he was making a speech at the agricultural committee meeting of his borough, he had but one peroration, his cherished device, his hobby:

Delenda est Britannia.

He used to accuse England of smothering the human race with her breath, and would compare her to the octopus, that hideous and sticky mass whose tentacles have the property of creating a vacuum around them.

"The world will never have any peace," said he, "until that brute has ceased sucking the blood of other nations, and been sunk at the bottom of the sea. Old as I am, I would go for a drummer, so that I might lend a helping hand in subduing the nation that has violated the most sacred laws of humanity."

All the scourges that visit the earth were put down by him to the credit of that traitress of a neighbour: earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, inundations, cholera, the plague; even down to his own colds in the head, all were attributed by him to the baneful influence of the breeze that had passed over England.

He did not hesitate to declare that the air of the *quartier Saint-Honoré* was polluted by the presence of the English colony in its midst. Every time he had passed through it, he fumigated himself as soon as he reached home.

Poor Marquis de Boissy, what would you have said, if you had lived long enough to receive invitations to *five o'clocquer?*

The old Anglophobist was sincere in his epic outbursts, and at the same time very amusing, for he was as full of wit as he was of Anglophobia.

He is dead, leaving no successor; France is at present without a declared Anglophobist.

Happier England can boast her Gallophobist. France has probably never heard of him; it is Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, whose name neither Liberal nor Conservative can pronounce, or hear pronounced, without a smile. The appearance of this dull orator is familiar, thanks to three salient points: locks cut in the style of the fifteenth century, an enormous collar and an eye-glass, which is kept in place at the cost of much discomfort.

Like the hair of Marshal Canrobert, this grotesque exterior belongs to history. It is through this eye-glass, which I trust will go down to posterity in one of the cases of the British Museum, that Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett surveys the interests of the nation, interests which he has undertaken to watch over.

In the British Parliament, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett represents the town of Eye, a place with a few hundred inhabitants, which I do not find mentioned in the Dictionary of Geography. This is an unpardonable oversight, which I should advise the successors of Bouillet to repair in the next edition.

This diverting politician passes his life in altering the map of the world, to the great advantage of the United Kingdom, it is needless to say. For the Germany of Prince Bismarck, he has a respect

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that approaches to worship. Other countries are *quantités négligeables*, to use an expression which M. Jules Ferry has rendered celebrated; but the most *négligeable* of them all, in his eyes—I mean in his eye—is France.

He is not, however, entirely without consideration for two or three privileged kingdoms, which he would, if occasion required, receive into his alliance. He would allow Italy to help him annihilate the French navy, and king Humbert would come in for Algeria and Tunis, as the reward for his services. Prince Bismarck would have little cause for grumbling: on the day of the distribution of prizes, the great German chancellor would receive from Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Poland, and the Island of Zanzibar, on condition, of course, that he promised not to make of the latter a naval station that might menace the route to India. That is understood; and really it is too bad to suppose Prince Bismarck capable of taking any such mean advantage of his protector's generosity.

A representative of the *Pall Mall Gazette* had enough British phlegm to interview the great statesman, and the account of the interview was published. For two days the *Pall Mall Gazette* out-did *Punch*, whose "Essence of Parliament" is serious politics by the side of these diverting

emanations. The courageous journalist played his part with admirable *sang-froid.* He even had sufficient self-control to put a few questions to Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett.

Here is one:

"In this general re-arrangement, will you not let France have Syria?"

"Let France have Syria?" cried the Member for Eye. "Certainly not. France does not want anything. We shall always be able to keep France in order. The French are afraid of the English; their country is rotten. If they were to meddle with our affairs, and offer any opposition to our politics, I should simply tell them, 'I don't take the least notice of you. If you are not satisfied, declare war with us.' And I guarantee you that, in less than two months, there would not be a single French vessel left on the sea."

At question time, in Parliament, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett is the terror of the ministers, who are forced to put on a pleasant face, and answer the thousand and one preposterous questions that this nightmare puts to them. Happily, both questions and answers are addressed to the Speaker, which helps the ministers to keep their countenance.

Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett believes himself cut out for foreign minister, but in this fond idea of his there is nothing alarming for France . . . . or for England.

This carnivalesque politician, who would probably have been puzzled to keep M. de Lesseps' account-books by single entry, and who, no doubt, imagines that the Suez Canal was made by digging holes in the sand, and filling them up with water brought by the bucketful, is always urging England, at the top of his voice, to monopolise that wonderful achievement of the genius of France, and to ignominiously drive the French from its banks.

The small number of my countrymen who do know Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett only regret, I feel sure, that he should be destitute of the Marquis de Boissy's wit, which would make him as great a source of diversion for the French as the late Senator was for the English.

N.B.—Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett is an American, naturalised an Englishman.

XII.

BRITISH PHILOSOPHY.

British philosophy!

Why not *English Philosophy?*

The difference is enormous. If I were to publish a treatise on the English philosophers, Bacon, Locke, Stuart Mill, Herbert Spencer, Frederic Harrison, &c., I should call my work: *A Study of English Philosophy.* But if I said to you that the English, not having succeeded in regaining Khartoum, contented themselves with regaining the road to England, I should add, that is British philosophy.

You would not say, "History of British Literature, you say, "History of English Literature."

There is something serio-comic about the word *British*, or something chauvinistic. You would be right in saying "British army, British soldiers." The lady who has been filling the newspapers with her outcries against the few nudities exhibited

in the Academy this season, is known only by the name of "British Matron."

An Englishman only calls his fellow-countrymen "Britons," when he is half laughing at them. When he says, "We Britons," he is not quite serious; on the contrary, when he says, "We Englishmen," his face reflects the feeling of respect with which the sound of his name inspires him.

The "English public," is good society; the "British" public means the common run of mortals in the United Kingdom.

British is to *English* very much what *Gaulois* is to *French.*

A learned schoolmaster, with a salary of £4,000 a year, read to me one day the contents of a postcard that he had just received from a worthy *Briton.* I keep the style intact.

"DEAR SIR,

"I leave for India in a few days, and before my departure, I should like to see my children placed under good care.

1 Boy aged 14
2 „ „ 12
3 Girl „ 8

"If you care to have them, please send estimate, which must be low."

"Business-like," said I.

"Well, my dear fellow," answered my friend, "not an uncommon type of British parent."

So I am right when I say: *British philosophy*: that excellent philosophy that teaches us to like what we have, when we cannot have what we like; the philosophy that is taught by that incomparable mistress *Necessity*.

We French people have very sensitive skins. We do not know how to take a kick, much less, make use of it. I mean a kick, in the figurative sense, of course: the one that leaves no trace, and does not prevent us from sitting at our ease.

But, if the Englishman knows how to take it, do you believe he feels it the less for that? Be not deceived on the point. He exercises control over himself. He does not give it back on the spot, but stores it up, rubs the injured part, applies a little cold cream, if necessary, and awaits the moment when he will be able to return it with interest. Such is the difference between the two men. To my mind, the Englishman is the more intelligent of the two.

Success turns our heads, reverses discourage and demoralise us: we know neither how to profit by victory, nor put up with defeat. In victory, we see only glory; in defeat, only disgrace.

Thus we are led to make war to serve dynastic interests: we go to the Crimea for the English; who do not go to Germany for us; we set the Italian nation on its feet, and to-day, see it, in its profound gratitude, preferring Germany to ourselves.

Criticism exasperates instead of benefiting us, and even occasionally amusing us. We hate our enemies, instead of being grateful to them for the good they do us; for if we owe part of our success to our friends, we owe a still greater part to our enemies.

There are two ways of causing an animal to advance—whether that animal be an artist, a writer, or a prime minister—first, by kind encouragements . . . . in front; secondly, by something less pleasant . . . . behind.

I firmly believe the second process to be the more efficient of the two.

It is only indifference that kills: in religion, in love, in politics, in literature, in everything.

Christianity came out of the Roman arenas,

English Protestantism out of the Smithfield fires; and many a demagogue owed his success, under the Second Empire, to the few months' imprisonment at Ste. Pélagie, that the Imperialist judges were silly enough to condemn him to.

Enemies, why, they are our fortune!

If you do something new, you make enemies of all the red-tapeists; if you do something intelligent, you make enemies of all the fools; if you are successful, you make enemies of all the army of failures, the misunderstood, the crabbed, and the jealous; but these little outbursts of hatred, one as diverting as the other, are really so many testimonials in your favour.

If you send in your application for some vacant post, and you succeed in obtaining it, you may be sure that there will be but one candidate who will consider that the election was made according to merit: yourself. The rest will cry out in chorus that your luck is something wonderful. Luck! What a drudge this poor word is made of! The privations you have imposed upon yourself, and the long nights that you have devoted to work, are *luck*. *Luck*, as a great English moralist puts it, means rising at six in the morning; *luck* means spending tenpence when you earn a shilling: *luck* means minding your own business and not meddling with other people's.

Good heavens, what bickerings go on in Paris! How even its lions tear and devour one another! What is the use of all this backbiting? What is there to be got by it? Is it not better always to speak well of one's neighbour? It is Christian, moreover, it is business-like. If I sing the praises of all my friends, these kind folks will go about the world, and build me up a reputation; "What sound judgment he has!" they will say of me; "what a knowledge of human nature! How he takes the measure of a man, the clever dog!"

It is not only the great guns you should speak well of, it is also of your smaller brethren. An Englishman, filling a high situation, said to me one day that he made it his aim to be on good terms with everybody around him, even down to the porters. He no doubt bears in mind that "*on a souvent besoin d'un plus petit que soi.*"

The Englishman knows that it falls to everyone's lot to be criticised, and he makes up his mind to endure it. He even has a certain admiration for those who criticise and rally him, if the operation is performed with a little dexterity. Violent criticism is the only kind he has a contempt for: "The fellow loses his temper," says he; "he is a fool, who proves that his cause is a bad one;"

and he goes on his way unconcerned. So while, in Paris, a Republican and a Bonapartist, who meet on the Boulevards, will look daggers at each other; a Liberal and a Conservative, who meet in Pall Mall, will shake hands and go and dine together amicably. After dinner, they repair to the House of Commons: one takes his seat on the left, the other on the right of the Speaker, who ought rather to be called the *Spoken to*, since everyone addresses his remarks to him, but he very rarely opens his lips.

Never any insults in this Parliament. You will never hear any such phrase as "the honourable member* has lied," but rather, "the honourable member has just made a remark which is scarcely in accordance with strict truth." These euphemisms are the soul of the English language, the outcome of the cool British temperament. Violent language has not the least power to move an Englishman to wrath—it rather excites his pity. In an English club, two members who had called each other "liars," would find their names promptly struck off the roll, and there would be an end of the matter. In France they would fight a duel.

* The word "liar" is the grossest insult that can be addressed to an Englishman; it has the force of an oath. The French word "*menteur*" would but very feebly translate it. Our word "*lâche*" is perhaps the nearest approach to it in force, although it has not the same meaning.

The following anecdote shows how ready the English are to acknowledge their little *failings*.

I was speaking of the English spirit of colonisation one day at a lecture, and in the course of my remarks on the subject, I took the liberty of saying, not without a slight touch of satire:

"When John Bull makes colonies, it is for the good of the natives."

"For their goods!" cried a jolly Briton from the gallery.

He evidently thought me too indulgent. By the manner in which my interruptor was applauded, I judged that he had properly seized and expressed the general feeling of the audience.

It is in adversity that the Englishman is to be admired. If he is defeated, he puts a good face upon it: he accepts his defeat, and makes the best of it. "I have proved that I can fight," he says; "why should I fight a hopeless battle?" If the door must give way to the burglars, he does not wait for them to break it open, he opens it himself; if he cannot save his furniture, he saves his door: it is so much gained.

England was not able to smash the Mahdi, who almost under her very eyes, robbed her of the hero whose noble deeds will be proudly related around

the English fireside for generations to come. Foolish pride might have led to the sending of fifty thousand men to the Soudan, and to the spending of ten million sterling over a revenge. "The game is not worth the candle," say the English, and they are at present quietly evacuating the country. This philosophy savours somewhat of that of the fox, but still it is philosophy.*

If a Mahdi should succeed in establishing a government on a firm basis in the Soudan, it would surprise none of us very much to learn one fine morning that England had sent a resident minister to Khartoum.

This is how a large daily paper expresses itself on the subject of the recall of the troops from the Soudan:

"The expedition for the relief of Gordon was certainly sent forth with the hearty approval of the country; and in the first shock of its failure, the first emotion of grief and resentment at the loss of the hero whose rescue was its object, we cannot wonder that public feeling should have responded with almost equal warmth to the proposal of an

* I know an Englishman who comforts himself for knowing no other language than his own, with the conviction that the knowledge of foreign languages gives a man the appearance of being an adventurer who has been tossing about the world, and whose absence was not deplored by his country.

expedition to avenge him. The advent of calmer judgment, however, brought with it the conviction that an enterprise of mere aimless vengeance would have been the last to commend itself to the high-souled enthusiast in whose name it was being undertaken; and, deprived of this moral support, the policy of 'breaking the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum' was quite unable to maintain its hold upon public favour on its pure political merits."*

England had run her head into a hornet's nest; she did well in withdrawing: the death of Gordon had saved her honour.

I only pity the lot of poor General Wolseley, now Baron of Cairo, who, but for the unlucky turn of affairs, might have returned home to have the title of Earl of Khartoum, and thirty thousand pounds more, conferred upon him.

It is thanks to this practical philosophy that, on the day after an election, you see all the newspapers express their satisfaction at the result. The winning side has always gained a more brilliant, more decisive, victory than ever, in spite of the enormous difficulties that had to be overcome. The losing side invariably gains a moral victory, and this is proved by $a + b$.

* *Daily Telegraph*, May 12, 1885

I must say that this philosophy is rarely wanting at our own general elections: the vanquished party clearly see the indication of a victory in the near future, and never fail, in the Chamber of Deputies, to challenge the Ministerial party to meet them before the constituencies. A party, represented in the Chamber by a score of deputies, bravely dubs itself the party of "*L'Appel au peuple.*"

When, after the defeat at Majuba Hill, England abandoned the conquest of the Transvaal, a feat which would have been mere child's play to her, but which would probably have aroused some indignation in Europe, Mr. Gladstone announced that, after all, the Boers were only fighting for their independence, and it was not seemly for generous England to annex by force a country that wished to be free, and had given such proof of valour.

A little master-piece in its way, this speech!

What a strange, ungrateful animal is man! What respect he has for his conquerors! What contempt for those he can conquer! When he speaks of the lion that devours him, or the eagle that tears his flesh, he is ready to take off his hat to them; when he speaks of the donkey that renders him great service, or of the goose that

furnishes him a good dinner, a pen to write with, and a bed to lie on, he cannot sufficiently express his contempt.

Everyone must remember the more or less abject apologies that Lord Granville, Minister for Foreign Affairs, made to Prince Bismarck in the course of this year. They quite astonished the world. In Paris, everyone wondered whether the English nation would really back up such platitudes, or if the British lion would not bound with indignation, and put to doors this minister who gave it such a large piece of humble pie to eat. "England is no more," cried one important Parisian paper, and the whole Press followed suit, and predicted that England, having now lost her prestige, her colonies would drop off like ripe grain from the stalk. As a matter of fact, nothing of the kind happened. It was important to regain the good graces of the redoubtable chancellor, and England sanctioned the bowing and scraping of her minister.

As for us, it was not England's honour that we had at heart so much as the reconciliation of our enemy with England that annoyed us, inasmuch as our Government had placed us more or less under the benevolent patronage of the White uirassier just at that time.

France never ought to forgive a French minister and his official press for having alienated from us, for some time, the sympathies of the freest people in the world, and thrown us into the arms of our most implacable enemy. England beat us at Waterloo, but she did not humiliate us; we can forget our defeat. Germany humiliated us in 1870: for this we can never forgive her.

WHEN the Englishman meets with his superior, he is ready to admit it. If he be jealous of him, he will not expose himself to ridicule by showing it. He does not shun the prosperous man, he cultivates his acquaintance. He is not necessarily a schemer for that; where there is no meanness there is no scheming. He acknowledges all the aristocracies: the aristocracy of birth, the aristocracy of money, and the aristocracy of talent; and I only blame him for one thing, which is that he has much less admiration for the third of these than for the other two. At a public dinner, in England, you may see in the places of honour, on either side of the chairman, one or two lordlings, then the wealthy guests . . . . then, but much farther down, the literary men, artists,* and other small fry.

* A great theatre announces concerts given by eminent artists male and female.

We French people have not the bump of veneration very much developed, it is true; but we have an admiration, approaching veneration, for talent and science, and the same Frenchman who takes no notice of a duke, will turn to get a second look at a great literary man or a savant. The commonplace Englishman, who humbles himself before a village squire, or a big banker, takes his revenge, when he meets the schoolmaster who, in France, would be a *professeur*, but who, in England, were he a double first of Oxford, an ex-scholar of Balliol College, goes through life by the name of *schoolmaster;* rinse your mouth quickly.

The City man, who earns £4,000 a year, compares himself to the schoolmaster, who earns £200, in the proportion of

$$\frac{200}{4{,}000} = \frac{1}{20}$$

In England, social disparity excites no jealousy. On the contrary, the noble and the wealthy are popular.

In France, we have given up admitting superiority, since our walls have been ornamented with the announcement that *all* Frenchmen are brethren, free men, and equals. This rage for equality

degenerates into jealousy of all superiority. As soon as superiority clearly manifests itself, especially in political life, it is ostracised : the words *tyran* and *coup d'état* are immediately heard ; and those who talk of ostracism forget that ancient Greece granted talent at least a few years of existence.

The Chamber of Deputies recently passed the *scrutin-de-liste* bill, after two days' deliberation. The same Chamber rejected the same project, *séance tenante*, when Gambetta presented it. Gambetta had shown that he possessed a genius for politics : down with Gambetta !

I was talking one day with a Frenchman, who still massacres the English language, although he has lived in this country more than twenty years. In the course of conversation I named a compatriot of ours. "Now, *there* is a man," said I, "who speaks English admirably."

"Admirably!" cried he, "well, yes, he does . . . like the rest of us."

This is a truly French retort.

Jealousy is the commonest and most characteristic failing of the French.

With us, jealousy is not only the stamp of mediocrity, as it is everywhere else ; it is a malady

that our greatest men have been tainted with. The acrimonious and contemptible polemic that Bossuet and Fénelon engaged in, the implacable hatred of Voltaire towards Rousseau, are but two instances of it; the history of French literature abounds with others. Our Parisian newspapers are daily filled with polemics and personalities. In the course of this year, two of our most brilliant chroniclers called each other respectively *tête de croque-mort*" and "*gros lourdaud.*"

In England, everyone minds his own business, and does not trouble himself about what his neighbour says or does. Just as in the House of Commons the members address the Speaker, and never one another, so the English journalist leaves the other members of his craft alone, and addresses himself only to the public for whom he works.

May I be allowed to make another comparison here?

If the Englishman is less jealous than the Frenchman of the success of his fellow-creature, it is because he does not attribute it to the same causes.

The Englishman maintains, rightly or wrongly, that a man owes his successes still more to his character than to his talent. If I am not mistaken,

it was Thomas Carlyle who laid down this rule of British philosophy.

This philosophical proposition is very comforting to the misunderstood: to hint to a man that he is less talented than another, is to vex him; on the contrary, to tell him that he has less shrewdness, is almost to pay him a compliment.

XIII.

THE SPIRIT OF DESTRUCTION AND THE SPIRIT OF CONSERVATISM.

How is it that the French are such vandals with regard to their country and their institutions, seeing that the love for their family, respect for their parents, and veneration for souvenirs, are such marked features in their character? The fact is that France is towed unresistingly by Paris, and that we often have to say, "the French" when in reality we only mean "the Parisians."

We are accused of no longer having much respect for anything. Alas! that it should be impossible to deny such an accusation!

A country, just like a family, lives by its traditions, its souvenirs, even by its prejudices. Destroy these souvenirs, some of which serve as examples and others as warnings, destroy these traditions, and you break the chain that binds the family together, and the past, though never so glorious, has been lived in vain. Is a country less dear to her sons

because of her prejudices? Do we not love to find them in a dear old mother?

Do not the very prejudices and weaknesses, the thousand little failings of our friends, often endear them to us?

Then why are we not content with France as she is? Why be always wanting to change her? Is it possible that we Frenchmen, the most home-abiding men in the world, can be attacked by this ridiculous mania for change?

The study of the French language furnishes of itself plain proof of our spirit of destruction, and the *Dictionnaire des Significations*, which is shortly to be published, and is awaited with impatience by the learned world, will show by the history of the changes of meaning that our words have undergone, that the character of the French people can be recognised to this very day by the descriptions that were given of it two thousand years ago.

The French word *benêt* formerly meant "blessed."

Thanks to the jokes of the old Gauls, our ancestors, it now means "silly." Our forefathers heard in church: "*Benedicti stulti quia habebunt regnum cœlorum.*"* *Bénis seront les pauvres d'esprit, car ils auront le royaume des cieux.* Now, in French,

* Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

pauvre d'esprit means "silly," and, on their way home, the old jokers would indulge in merry remarks at one another's expense. When anyone gave proof of want of wit, he was congratulated on having his entry into the kingdom of heaven secured: "You are *stultus* enough to be *benedictus*;" and the first adjective soon came to have the meaning of the second.

Prêcheur formerly meant "one who preaches;" thanks to the same spirit of bantering, it now means "one who scolds," or "one who twaddles," and the word *prédicateur* was invented to replace it.

It will soon be impossible to pronounce the word *fille* in good society, except to express relationship.

Why are we obliged to make use of this word to designate a child of the feminine sex? Simply because the feminine of *garçon* began to be used in a bad sense in the seventeenth century. Before the feminine of *garçon*—which the French had to give up, as they will soon have to give up the word *fille*—they had a word which is, in the present day, a horribly coarse expression.

Such is the march of the spirit of destruction.

The Gauls have always been rich in wit, but wit often of a bantering and sarcastic kind, which disparages and covers with ridicule, and of which Voltaire was the personification.

People who eat sausages on a Friday,* in France, think they are doing a smart thing, and rebelling against a form of tyranny, forgetting that Lenten fasts had originally a sanitary reason. To give rest to the stomach, such was the aim; and a French physician said to me one day: "If there were no Lent in the spring, I should order my patients to fast two or three times a week, through that season of the year." The Talmud forbids the Jews to eat pork, because that meat is heavy and indigestible; the Koran forbids the use of wine among the Musulmans, because of its intoxicating properties; in fact, have not all these religious edicts a foundation of common sense, and do we not give proof of common sense in conforming to them? Truly, he is but a pitiful hero—not to use a stronger term—who boasts of not following a salutary counsel, that he does not know how to appreciate, because he does not understand.

The English, unlike us, cling to their past, and because a custom is old, that is a sufficient reason, in their eyes, for holding it sacred. I feel sure that there is not an Englishman, who does not religiously eat his slice of plum-pudding on

* Everybody knows that, at Guernsey, Victor Hugo had an Irish Catholic cook, and that the illustrious poet abstained from meat on Fridays, not to offend his faithful servant.

Christmas Day, let him be in the Bush at the Antipodes, on land or on water, and no matter in what latitude.

It is a veritable communion.

The English observance of the Sunday is tyrannical, I admit, but it is an ancient institution, and, if only for that reason, should command respect.

If the people of Great Britain do not build anything in a day, they have, at any rate, the good habit of not demolishing anything in a day.

The Englishman has an innate love of old walls, that recall to him a historical fact, a departed grandeur, a memory of his childhood.

I have been present at many a touching scene, that has proved to me how deeply the *religio loci* is rooted in the heart of every true-born Englishman.

Here is one.

An old City school, dating from the fifteenth century, has just been transplanted into one of the suburbs of London.

The new building is a palace compared with the old.

Yet it was with profound sadness that old scholars learnt of the removal of the school from its time-honoured home. If they could have had a voice in the matter, the change would not have taken place. The splendour of the new school was nothing to them: the name was the same, but

it was their old school no more. On the day of the farewell ceremony, in the City, I saw grey-headed men, who had come from distant parts of the country, on purpose to bid farewell to the venerable walls, to have one more look at them.

If England, who only dates from the eleventh century, lives on her souvenirs and turns to them for inspiration, with what souvenirs might we inspire ourselves, we who have been a nation for twenty-three centuries?

There was no England when we were the terror of Rome. There was no England when our brave and generous ancestors went to battle to deliver or avenge an oppressed nation, or welcomed a poor stranger as a friend sent by the gods. There was no England when Vercingetorix made Cæsar tremble, nor was there yet an England when, eight hundred years later, the exploits of Roland were inspiring the poets of the whole of old Europe.

Ah! let us cling to our past, we who have such a glorious one! Where is the nation that can boast such another?

XIV.

PARLIAMENTARY POLITICS.

EVERY time an Englishman asks me, "Well, who is to be your next Prime Minister?" or, "Who will succeed M. Grévy?" I feel embarrassed and almost ashamed, for I know not what to reply to such questions. If I did, I should be wiser than my countrymen.*

This is what we have come to.

We are making no progress towards stability; we are indulging in a good deal of destruction, but very little construction. There is not a minister who can make any important reform, because there is not one that is an undisputed leader.

Each one follows in the steps of his predecessor, or else undoes what he has done; we live from hand to mouth, and the morrow is uncertainty.

Ah! what I envy the English is that security for

* The English are very fond of putting such questions to Frenchmen they meet; the query is seldom unaccompanied by a little patronising air.

the morrow, which they owe to a form of government no one, so to speak, thinks seriously of questioning.

The Englishman is the staunchest monarchist, and at the same time the freest man in Europe, which proves that freedom is compatible with a monarchical government. There is no French Legitimist more royalist than he, there is no French Republican more passionately fond of liberty; nay, I will go so far as to say that, in France, people would be treated as dangerous demagogues, who demanded certain liberties, which the English have long possessed under a monarchy, and to defend which the most conservative of them would allow himself to be rent in pieces.

At first sight, the theory of government in England appears to be most simple: two great political parties, each having its leader, whose authority is uncontested, and who takes office amidst the acclamations of half the nation. Is the country threatened with danger, party spirit vanishes, Liberals and Conservatives disappear: the *Englishman* is supreme.

All this appears as simple as admirable. I will show farther on, however, that if there is fixity

in the form of the government, there cannot be any consistency in the politics of the country.

At the present moment, I maintain that a Frenchman cannot accept the functions of a minister without running the risk of losing his dignity, or compromising his honour. Every means is employed to use him up in a day; but the weapons of predilection are insult, calumny, and mud. The insult is addressed not only to the man, but to the office which he holds. Scarcely is he in power when the words treason, impeachment, jobbery, peculation, are heard, and when he does fall, it is to rise no more.

One of the consequences of a badly interpreted, jealous democracy is, that every man believes himself born to be a minister, and what is certain is that, when every man has had his turn at it, it will be necessary to look for something else. So we go on. Everyone wants to supplant another in order to find places for a few friends, or to revenge old grievances.

What do the Anarchists want? To suppress the

richer classes, according to their own showing. Ask them for their programme of government, and they will tell you, "*Les bourgeois nous ont mangés, nous voulons les manger à notre tour.*" The other day they were for hanging all the better classes, and confiscating their belongings. For the benefit of whom? The Anarchists? But, my good people, does it not occur to you that you would become *bourgeois* in your turn, and therefore deserving of the rope? It is not capital that you detest, but only capitalists. Let capital change hands, what a metamorphosis will take place!

At another meeting of the same kind, it was unanimously resolved to send to the guillotine every man who could not produce a pair of toil-stained hands, sanctified by labour.

Let a wise and careful workman save a little money, and he immediately becomes an *aristo*, a traitor to the holy cause, in the eyes of his brother who *wants no work to do.*

These interesting worthies imagined that a Republic meant well-lined pockets and little to do, except voting.*

* It is true that the position of elector would be no sinecure. Judge for yourself. The "Revolutionary Congress of Workmen" has just passed the following resolutions: "Abolition of the President of the Republic and Senate; all

They imagined that a Republic would be their own government—in other words, society turned topsy-turvey; that they were going to enter into possession of the mansions of the Faubourg Saint-Germain and the Faubourg Saint-Honoré without opposition, and have their boots cleaned by the aristocracies of birth and money. Alas! perhaps these poor simpletons sometimes fall to regretting the Empire, and the *expropriations*, that supplied them with as much work as they wanted. It is possible, too, that they may have had more respect for a government that would have dispersed their meetings with the bayonet, than for one that allows them to keep Saint Monday to their hearts' content.

The Anarchists (the name ought to be sufficient to kill the party, if it existed at all, since it signifies "the party that refuses to accept any government

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Bills passed by the Chamber to be referred to the people; magistrates to be dismissed and to be replaced by arbitrators; all civil and military functionaries to be elected by the people." Here is work cut out for the people. Soldiers will elect their officers, choosing those who will promise that they shall not be shot, or taken to climates that will not agree with them; schoolboys will elect their masters, showing their preference for those who do not believe in caning or impositions; light-fingered gentry will elect their "arbitrators," who will, of course, be gentlemen with a sympathy for the craft. And so forth.

whatever"), the Anarchists, I say, are but a handful of men that are to be found in Paris and two or three great provincial towns. France, honest, economical, hard-working France, ignores these powerless apostles of idleness, who would be very pleased to pass for dangerous, but who are only grotesque, and that in the saddest acceptation of the word.

Anarchists have only the importance which governments are foolish enough to give them. The revolutionary socialistic party may have friends in the Chamber of Deputies, but, correctly speaking, it is not represented there by any member.

To imagine that a nation of proprietors is revolutionary is the height of absurdity: a nation of workers, who naturally wish to protect the fruits of their industry, is necessarily an eminently pacific and conservative nation, and that is just what France is.

Processions with flags, speeches, meetings, political dinners, only become events by the action of a hostile police. Allow the processions to proceed, the flags to fly, the speeches to be spoken, the meetings to be held, and the political dinners to be quietly digested, and no one will be the worse off. The combat will fall through for want of combatants.

This is what the English understand so well; this is what we French have yet to learn.

THERE is a great virtue, a virtue eminently English, which we French do not possess: respect for the man who is down. Yet it is not that we lack magnanimity; but we also have our contrasts. Generous, of a chivalresque character, with a repugnance for any kind of meanness, we yet insult the fallen man and even bespatter the memory of one who has gone to the grave. We consoled ourselves for Sedan by singing "*C'est le Sire de Fiche-ton-Camp.*" On the death of M. Thiers, a celebrated Bonapartist journalist exclaimed that he could jump for joy over the tomb of him who had just liberated his country. Open the newspapers of to-day, and you will still see Gambetta's memory insulted.

In England, they would have forgotten that Gambetta was a party man, and have remembered only his eloquence, which that of Mirabeau alone could have eclipsed, and which made him one of the brightest ornaments of contemporary France.

When Mr. Bright has left the political arena for a world from whence jealousy is banished, and

subscription lists are opened for erecting a statue to him, the Conservatives will send their contributions as well as the Liberals: they will forget the Radical, and remember but the orator and the philanthropist. At the death of Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield, it was Mr. Gladstone, the political enemy of the Tory chief, who pronounced the panegyric of that illustrious man in the House of Commons.

This is a sentiment that is found, it is interesting to notice, in all classes, even down to the English rough. When two men of the lower classes fight, and one of them falls to the ground, the other waits until his adversary is up again, before returning to the attack. Do not imagine, however, that this sentiment is born of magnanimous bravery, for this same man, who respects his fallen adversary, will, as soon as he reaches his hovel, seize his wife by her hair, knock her down, and literally kick her to death at the first provocation.

In the latter case, there is no combat: there is correction administered by the master to his slave.

If the English have more respect than we for the man who is down, it is because they forget much more quickly than ourselves. Does this prove that they have less intelligence or more generosity? No. They are less impressionable,

that is all. The trace disappears more easily, because the impression is less deep. I think this is one of the most remarkable differences between the two peoples.

In France, it is not an unwise act that ruins a political man—it is, above all things, a phrase blurted out in a moment of exultation. An act is forgotten sooner or later; but an unfortunate phrase sticks to a man, and becomes part and parcel of him, his motto, written on his forehead in indelible characters, and which he carries with him to the grave.

Take the case of M. Emile Ollivier. Since the fall of Thiers, we have had no minister, with the exception of Gambetta, whose political talent could be compared to that of the Liberal minister of Napoleon III. And yet, M. Emile Ollivier little knows his compatriots, if he thinks it is possible for him ever again to enter the political arena. To this very day, the masses ignore that it was he who proclaimed war with Prussia, but there is scarcely a child who does not know that he said he contemplated the coming struggle with a light heart. M. Ollivier is, and will remain to the day of his death, the *light-hearted man.* Ridicule kills in France,

and M. Ollivier is ridiculous. It is all over with him.*

M. Jules Favre was a great orator, and for that reason one of the ornaments of his century. This is forgotten. He signed the disastrous conditions of peace dictated by Prince Bismarck. That might have been overlooked. But he had said beforehand that not one inch of territory, not one stone of any French fortress, would he yield. This sentence was his political knell.

General Ducrot was a brave soldier. On leaving Paris to go and attack the Prussians, he was so ill-advised as to declare that he would return "dead or victorious." However, he was still more ill-advised to come back alive and vanquished. Here was another only fit to throw overboard.

Our history is full of similar incidents: actions pass away and are forgotten, words remain. Ask any ordinary Frenchman, not well up in the history of France, who Mirabeau was. He will tell you that Mirabeau was a representative of the people, who one day exclaimed at the *Assemblée Constituante*: "We are here by the power of the people: nothing but the power of the bayonet shall remove us."

* A member of Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet said to me one day that, in England, a statesman of M. Ollivier's ability would be sure to return to power.

The history of France might be written between inverted commas.

Louis XIV. has gone down to posterity with the formula: "*L'État c'est moi*;" Napoleon III. with that device, suggested by the irony of fate: "*L'Empire c'est la paix.*" Lamartine is the man who, outside the Hôtel de Ville, cried, "The tricolour flag has been round the world; the red flag has only been round the Champ de Mars." Thiers said: "The Republican form of government is the one that divides us the least." Gambetta: "Clericalism: that is the enemy."

And to parody a celebrated proverb, I might say that French politics may be summed up in the words:

Acta volant, verba manent.

Things are forgotten to such an extent in England, that I have rarely seen a Liberal paper revert to the fact that Lord Beaconsfield, the illustrious leader of the Conservative party, began his political life in the ranks of the Radicals, or Conservative papers remind people that Mr. Gladstone, the leader of the Liberals, began his brilliant career in the Conservative ranks. At all events, I never saw anyone reproach these great statesmen with having turned their coats. Lord Derby who was

Minister for Foreign Affairs under Lord Beaconsfield, is * Colonial Minister in Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet. *Punch* had a caricature on the subject, and there was an end of the matter.

Such proceedings would excite contempt or indignation in France; but, to judge them in England from a French point of view would be absurd.

In France, political convictions rest on the form of government. In England, everyone, or almost everyone, is of one mind on that subject: Conservatives and Liberals both will have a democracy, having for its object the material, moral, and intellectual progress of the people, with a monarchy to act as ballast.

The only difference that I see in the history of the two parties, during the last fifty years, is that the Conservatives willingly sacrifice their home policy to the prestige of a spirited foreign policy, while the Liberals pay more attention to internal politics, to the detriment, perhaps, of foreign ones.

Here it should be added that, when an English man accepts the task of forming a ministry, it is, in the eyes of his partisans, out of pure abnegation, to serve his country, and, in the eyes of his opponents, out of pure ambition, to serve his own interests.

The difference, which separates a Monarchist and

* May 15, 1885.

a Republican in France, is an abyss that nothing can bridge over; the difference which separates a Liberal and a Conservative in England is but a trifling step.

So the candidate for Parliament, who rehearses *in petto*, the little speech that he means to address to the electors, winds up with: "Gentlemen, such are my political convictions, but, if they do not please you, let it be well understood between us that I am ready to change them." Or: "Gentlemen, I used to be a Conservative, and at bottom I am a Conservative still, but Mr. Gladstone has appointed me a Civil Commissioner at a salary of £2,000 a year, and I consider that a statesman who chooses his servants so well ought to be supported by all sensible men. Besides, in my new capacity, it is not a party that I am serving, it is my country."* To speak seriously, I really see very little either in the so-called Liberal or Conservative principles that can cause an Englishman to be anything more than the partisan of a certain group of men.

Under the circumstances, it is not surprising that English politics should, above all things, consist in doing in Office what has been valiantly fought

* Something that strikes me with astonishment is to see the Jews sitting on the Conservative side. But for the Liberals they would never have obtained their enfranchisement. Alas! gratitude has never been a political virtue.

in Opposition: it is a school of incisive, passionate debate, nothing more. The following incident, which is as instructive as it is amusing, is sufficient proof of this:

When Lord Beaconsfield deftly snatched Cyprus from the "unspeakable" Turk, in 1878, and, presenting it to John Bull, asked him to admire the fine catch, John's Liberal sons turned up their noses, declared that the honesty of the proceeding was dubious, and vowed the place was not fit to send British soldiers to. "It would hardly be humane to send our convicts there," they said; "not even flies could stand the climate." Two years later the Tories went out of office, and the Liberals came to power. What happened? You think, perhaps, that the Liberals promptly restored the island to the Turks with their compliments and apologies. Catch them! Better than that. No sooner were the Tories out of office than the yachts of three leading Liberals might have been seen sailing towards Cyprus, which, it would seem, a simple change of ministry had changed into a health resort. In the beginning of May of the current year, the Liberal Government gave orders to the military authorities of the army of occupation in Egypt, to send to Cyprus all the sick soldiers, who were in a fit state to be transferred —

not to finish them up, but actually to hasten their convalescence.

Ever since every householder has enjoyed electoral rights, each general election has placed the Opposition in power; and the enfranchisement of Mr. Gladstone's new *couches sociales* is not likely to change this state of things, which is indeed very easy to account for.*

The necessarily guarded speech of those in office does not catch the ear of the ignorant multitude so readily as the irresponsible talk of the Opposition. The man in power has to defend a policy, the other attacks it right and left: it is he who has the popular *rôle*. "Ah!" say the crowd, "smart fellow that! if we could only have him in Office, things would be done in a proper manner! What has become of all the fine promises of the ministry?"

So they make up their minds to vote for the man who comes to them with fresh promises, and to throw overboard the one who has not been able to keep his.

If the Government has engaged in war, the Opposition proves to the people what a disastrous, or, at the best, what a useless war it was; if the Government has been able to maintain peace,

* It is, however, an experimen that has yet to be made.

the Opposition proves to the people that it was at the price of national honour. The Opposition is always in the right.

At the present moment (May, 1885), the members of Mr. Gladstone's Government, who address public meetings, are obliged to speak of the Russians as "our allies." Lord Salisbury, speaking of them in public the other day, was able to allow himself the luxury of calling them "swindlers and bankrupts."

Try and compete with people who can use such language with impunity!

A few months before returning to power, in 1879, Mr. Gladstone made use of similar expressions with regard to Austria. As soon as he became Prime Minister again, he sent his humblest apologies to Vienna. Lord Salisbury will have to send his to St. Petersburg before the end of the year,* and declare that he never had the least intention of wounding Russia's feelings, but that "*Opposition oblige*, you know."

To think that men of talent should lower themselves so far as to flatter the populace with such platitudes to obtain their favour! How sad

* This sentence was written in May, 1885. I mention this, that I may not be accused of acting on the advice given by Artemus Ward to his compatriots: "Never prophesy before you know."

a sight is this vulgarisation of politics! And people often wonder how it is that, in democracies, the great thinkers, the geniuses of the nation, refrain from buying the favours of the people at the price of their dignity! Unhappily, this is the fate of democracies: they can but seldom be ruled by the genius of the nation, by men who would not be appreciated by the masses. No system lends itself better to the reign of unscrupulous mediocrity, for no other system obliges its chiefs to come and humble themselves before the ignorant populace, by giving them acrobatic performances in order to obtain their suffrages.

Under a democracy, everybody goes into politics, and everybody requires to be pleased.

The literary man, the scholar, the artist, all are criticised by more or less competent judges; but the statesman, who is there that does not criticise him? Who does not take upon himself to judge him without appeal? Who does not drag him in the mud? Who does not cry, "Stop thief!" when he is bold enough to buy a dozen railway shares, like the smallest shopkeeper in the land?

Why, even the schoolboy goes into politics now-a-days.

I warrant that there is not a single man, in France or England, who does not believe himself perfectly capable of criticising the acts of his

Prime Minister, and very few, who do not feel equal to filling his place, if, for *the good of their country*, they were called by their fellow-citizens to fulfil these arduous duties.*

No one says to himself, "The Prime Minister is not a fool; he ought to know what he is about; and even if he were a rogue, is it not to his interest to serve his country to the best of his ability?"

The vote of an ignorant workman, or an illiterate peasant, has as much weight in the scales of the country's destiny as the vote of a Renan or of a Carlyle; such is the natural result of universal suffrage. The intelligent portion of the nation would like to see tried and business-like men at the head of the Government; but the masses will have orators, and to be a hero in a democracy, you must possess what the English call "the gift of the gab," and what Molière used to call the gift of being "*fort en gueule.*"

I wonder how much longer the English, with their party politics, their cricket politics, will be able to laugh at our ministerial crises? Does not

* A young English girl of fourteen, asked me one day, if I did not think that Gladstone ought to be hanged. What, dear child, not even extenuating circumstances! Conciliatory politics are not particularly popular with young and patriotic England.

the policy of each party consist in straining every nerve to bowl out the adversary in order to take his place at the wicket?

It will be interesting to watch the game in the next Parliament, when Mr. Parnell, with his eighty followers, will be master of the situation, whenever he chooses. Only for the throne do I see any security.

This of itself is, of course—as far as it goes—a guarantee for public tranquillity.

Let me finish by a remark of Lord Randolph Churchill's:

"The Radicals possess the great qualities for political life; they are clever and noisy; they are very unprincipled and very unscrupulous."

Surely the Radicals have not the monopoly of these great qualities, to judge by the unprecedented success of the young, clever, and noisy Conservative leader.

Postscript.—This young and brilliant aristocrat has just been appointed Secretary of State for India.

Good-bye, fiery orator! no more beautiful speeches, no more fireworks!

By crossing the narrow gangway, the member for Woodstock has become responsible, and passed to

the extreme of dulness. Will a salary of £5,000 a year appear a consolation in the eyes of this spoiled child? Baby is bribed with a nice *bonbon* to keep the peace.

XV.

LORDS AND SENATORS.

ENGLAND is governed by the eldest sons of the aristocracy.

Now, all who have had much to do with youth are perfectly agreed that, as a rule, the eldest son is the least intelligent in each family.

The first born is a *ballon d'essai.*

Moreover, the eldest son of the aristocrat is the sole heir to his father's title and estates. He knows that the fortune cannot escape him. And so, at school, he does no work; he leaves that sort of thing to his younger brothers, who will have to make their way in the world. When he leaves school or college, his chief subjects of preoccupation are Jews and jockeys.

It is needless to add that, in the House of Lords, the proportion of Conservatives to Liberals is overwhelming.

Consequently, when the Liberals are in power,

'the House of Lords is a dangerous institution, which may at every moment hinder the working of the governmental machine; and when the Conservatives are in power, the House of Lords is a useless institution, because its approbation can be relied upon in advance by the Government.

Does it not seem as if any second chamber must necessarily be dangerous or useless?

There is an episode of French history which, to my mind, has been forgotten much too soon.

It teaches a great lesson on the usefulness of Upper Houses.

It was under the Second Empire.

The French Senate was then, intellectually speaking, a body of men superior to the House of Lords, since they were picked men—chosen by the Emperor, it is true, but still chosen. With the exception of Sainte-Beuve, these senators of the Empire were more or less Bonapartists: cardinals, archbishops, marshals, generals, literary men, all men of importance. The duty of the Senate was to watch over the Constitution, and to stop any bill, passed by the Chamber of Deputies, that might have endangered the existence of the actual form of Government.

Well, in July, 1870, the Franco-Prussian war broke out, and, on the 4th of September, in the

same year, the Chamber of Deputies deposed the Emperor, and proclaimed the Republic.

Here was a grand opportunity for the senators of showing their power, and of earning the 30,000 francs that they received from their master.

Yet what happened?

Not one voice was raised by the Senate against the act of the deputies.

Better still: nobody thought of taking the trouble to dismiss them officially. In presence of the strong will of the people, they packed up their traps quietly, and, to the best of my recollection, even forgot to go to the counting-house to receive their month's pay.

Poor senators! they seemed to have the measure of their power in stormy times to an inch.

In presence of the will of the nation, strongly manifested, the House of Lords would be as powerless as the French Senate was in 1870.

A strange application of that great English principle, "the right man in the right place," is the existence of this same Upper House in England!

What! can it be that this, the most sensible nation of the world, who has withdrawn all the privileges of its monarchs, who has imposed restrictions upon them, and will not even allow

them to make the slightest political allusion in public, can it be this nation that has given itself so many masters at once? If the English do not allow their kings unlimited power, it is because, in their wisdom, they fear that those kings may be born fools, or grow into despots; but out of five hundred lords, three or four hundred may be born fools: where then is the gain? Better be governed by one fool than by three or four hundred.

Among a free people, intellect alone ought to be admitted into the councils of the nation. No one could have a word to say against such men as the Duke of Argyll and the Marquis of Salisbury having a vote to cast into the scales of England's destinies; but would not these able members of the aristocracy of birth gain in influence and prestige, if they sat in an elected house, side by side, with the aristocracy of talent?

Perhaps they may think so themselves.

The House of Lords owes its existence to the English taste for antiquities or curiosities; this people, to its honour be it said, only slowly rids itself of its trammels.

The King of French Snobs.

It would be imprudent, not to say impudent, to attack the subject of English snobs. There are

themes which seem marked "Dangerous ground." If the French want to know all about English snobs, they must turn to Thackeray, who has completely exhausted the subject.

The snob is the man who is ashamed of his origin, and wishes to occupy a better place in society than he is entitled to; who hires a couple of flunkeys by the evening, to make folks believe he keeps a grand establishment; or who lowers his blinds from the middle of July to the middle of September, to make it appear that he is out of town, *en villégiature*, at the sea-side, or at his place in the country.

The king of French snobs calls himself M. du Bois, M. du Val, M. du Mont—or better still, M. de la Roche-Pichenette. His father, an honest man and useful member of society, amassed penny by penny a snug fortune: his name was Dumont, Duval, Dubois, of the *bois* of which useful men are made. The son squanders the money of his lamented papa, and calls himself Du Bois, of the *bois* of which parasites and idlers are made. If one of his estates happens to be called "la Roche-Pichenette," he dubs himself M. de la Roche-Pichenette, which looks grander still. He would be puzzled to show you the letters patent which authorise him in assuming this grotesque name; but he will tell you that, if he cannot do so, it

is because those Republican scoundrels of '93 destroyed them. He is a clerical and staunch Royalist, as a matter of course: *noblesse oblige*. In this respect, he outdoes the genuine nobleman, who needs make no noise to attract attention to a name, which everyone knows, and which, in spite of what may be said on the subject, often recalls the memory of some glorious event in the past. Noise he must make, unfortunately for his cause. So a German jumps on the table to make believe that he is merry.

He talks of his ancestors, and rails at the Revolution which made a man of him. Ancestors he has of course, as you and I have; they were, doubtless, worthy fellows, good patriots, who may have been present at Fontenoy, at Rocroy, or even at the siege of Jerusalem, for the very simple reason that the principle of spontaneous generation has never been applied to man. But if his ancestors lent a helping hand at the taking of Jerusalem, and also, perhaps, by the irony of fate, at the taking of the Bastille, he, for his part, has taken nothing particular except a sham title.

This kind of snob is not met with in England. The names of the lords, baronets, and knights are published every year: fraud is impossible. The few contraband barons that are to be found in England are barons of the Holy Empire.

XVI.

ORDER AND LIBERTY.

OBEDIENCE is the watchword of England.

The Englishman revolts only against injustice, and that but figuratively. Brought up to respect the law, it is in the name of the law that he demands redress for his grievances, and by the law that he obtains it.

Dieu et mon droit, such is his device, and notwithstanding that he has rather monopolised the first, and that his definition of the second is a trifle vague, it is certain that by them he is stimulated to do great deeds.

Take the schoolboy, for instance.

In most of the great public schools of England, the refractory schoolboy is still chastised by means of the rod, but do not imagine that punishment is administered in an arbitrary fashion. The young offender is brought to judgment. The head master hears the evidence against him, and listens to his defence. If he is found guilty of the

offence with which he is charged, the head master pronounces his condemnation and the boy is corrected on the spot. He submits without a murmur. The system may be bad, but what is good about it is that it generally proves a thorough *correction* for the child.

Under similar circumstances, a French schoolboy would probably seize an inkstand, or the first thing he could lay hands on, and menace his judge or his executioner with it.

Do not ask me which of the two I prefer, but let me tell you that the only punishments I have any objection to are unjust or arbitrary ones, and that severe ones, administered with discretion, are generally salutary. At all events, I ask you not to believe that the young Englishman is cowardly because he knows how to endure pain, and is submissive, for a few minutes later you will see him rejoin his comrades at their play, and perform veritable acts of heroism. It almost seems to me that a child gives proof of courage in submitting to a punishment which he knows he has deserved, and that a spirit of submission to discipline is more to be commended in him than a spirit of rebellion. In resigning himself to his fate, and enduring his punishment, the English schoolboy learns to master a passion; the French schoolboy, in rebelling, allows a passion to master

him. If the English system is bad, the French one must be worse.

Since I have pronounced the word *rebellion*, allow me to show you how differently the thing is understood in French and English schools.

Let us suppose that some privilege, which the pupils have long enjoyed, and looked upon as their right, has been withdrawn, rightly or wrongly, no matter which. What will the French schoolboys do? They will probably retire to a dormitory, there to sulk and protest *vi et armis*. They will barricade themselves, victual the entrenchments for a few hours, and prepare for a struggle. Rebellion has wonderful charms for them: they are insurgents, therefore they are heroes. If the cause be a bad one, that matters little, it will be sanctified by the revolution; the main thing is to play at the *peuple souverain*. These hotheaded youths will stand a siege as earnestly as if they had to defend their native soil; dictionaries, inkstands, boots, bedroom furniture, such are the missiles that are pressed into service in the glorious battle for liberty.

But, alas for youthful valour! it all fades before the pleadings of an empty stomach; the struggle is abandoned, the citadel forsaken, and arms are laid down. The misguided ones are received back into the fold, to be submitted to stricter dis-

cipline than ever, the heroic instigators of the little *fête* are, in the end, restored to the tender care of their mammas, or, in other words, expelled from the school. And for a boy to be expelled from a French *lycée* is no light matter, for the doors of all the others are closed to him, and the pleasure of playing at heroes for a few hours is often bought at the price of ruined prospects.

They manage these things differently in England. Under the same circumstances, this is what the schoolboys of old England would do. A dozen of the most influential and respectable among them would promptly form themselves into a committee, and organise an indignation meeting of all the pupils of the school. This meeting would be presided over by the captain of the school, or even by one of the masters, and the grievance would be discussed, not with any display of temper, but with the calm dignity of the free citizen. Propositions made by the boys, and duly seconded in a parliamentary manner, would be put to the vote, and the president would be charged to transmit such resolutions to the proper authorities. The meeting would then break up in a perfectly orderly manner and without a murmur, everyone going his way, like a good Republican who had just performed a civic duty of the gravest importance.

Such a meeting as this has never been interdicted by the authorities, for the very simple reason that such a meeting never endangered the good discipline of a school.

Has it indeed fallen to our lot, to us who live under a Republic, to see a people living under a Monarchy, enjoying every form of liberty: liberty of thought, liberty of speech, liberty of the press, liberty to meet together, in fact the right of grumbling in every form imaginable; to see them able to get redress for all their grievances, without having recourse to violence?

Shall I tell you something about the great manifestation, held in July, 1884, in favour of the abolition of the House of Lords?

The Lords had refused to sanction the Franchise Bill—a bill which was to give electoral rights to two millions of Englishmen, who had been deprived of them up to that time. Two hundred thousand persons meet and quietly pass through the great arteries of London. Not a voice is lifted. The immense crowd makes for Hyde Park and there divides itself into twelve groups around twelve improvised platforms. Speeches are made, resolu-

tions passed, and the meeting breaks up in an orderly manner.

But, you will say, the police were there, of course, to see that these people did not break the law.

The police, indeed! Yes, most certainly they were there; but it was to protect the people's right of meeting, and not to hinder them, or oppose them, in the exercise of their privileges.

It was really a wonderful sight for a foreigner, to see this crowd, bent upon overthrowing the Constitution, preceded, flanked, and followed, by mounted police, whose duty it was to see that these subjects of Her Majesty were allowed to protest unmolested! And that which afforded me some amusement and more instruction still, was the sight of the Prince of Wales and some friends of his, installed on a balcony at Whitehall,* and evidently there to see the fun; to see at Pall Mall windows the faces of lords, apparently much amused in watching these people, who had taken a holiday, and who, if they did not gain their point, had the satisfaction of feeling that they lived in a country where they could air their grievances freely.

* Some two hundred years ago, a king was taken to Whitehall to be beheaded for wishing to govern without his people; but here was a future king who had come there to see the people try to overthrow the House of Lords. *Tempora mutantur.*

The House of lords exists still, but its members passed the Franchise Bill last November.

The Lords are wise persons.

Ah! how quickly our anniversary-keepers would draw in their horns, if the Minister of the Interior spoke to them somewhat in this manner: "You wish to hold your demonstration, my friends .... I beg your pardon, citizens; why, certainly! Demonstrate away, to your hearts' content: there is nothing to hinder you. You want to carry a red flag about the streets? Carry it by all means—red, yellow, blue, any colour of the rainbow that you like best. I will put as many policemen at your disposition as you may require to protect you in the free exercise of your rights."

How small the revolutionary would look if he were talked to in this way! How mortified he would be! But draw your sword, and he is happy. He goes about crying:

"The people are being slaughtered!"

It is the very worst course that could be adopted. The proper cure for the mania for demonstrations is not the sword, but a little cold water.

Try how many followers you will get for a standard of revolt raised with the cry:

"The people are being syringed?"

Ah! where is the Government that will have

first the strength, and then the good sense, to leave the people alone, instead of doing its best to irritate them into adopting the *rôle* of martyr? Monarchy or Republic, what matters the name of this Government, so that it gives us what we are in search of —our liberty.

The English newspapers love to fill their columns with the sayings and doings of French Anarchists, so as to try and prove to their readers that France "navigue toujours sur un volcan," although they know very well that our revolutionary mountains are incapable of bringing forth even a mouse, as the ridiculous failure of the proposed Anarchist demonstration at Victor Hugo's funeral proved. The English know perfectly well that in the year 1867, thanks to the inopportune meddling of the police, there was a riot, in Hyde Park, which was likely to have proved very serious. The English know all this; but the pot always had a trick of calling the kettle black.

Our lower orders are a thousand times more intelligent than the English ones; and when the French police force cease to be the symbol, the instrument, of an arbitrary power, in order to become, in some sort, the protection of the people, our workmen will astonish the world with their good behaviour, as they did on the day of our immortal poet's apotheosis.

The Frenchman is impressionable, excitable; but he is gentle, and easy to govern. The Parisians never raised any riots that could not be traced to the want of tact, or the malice, of the Government; and we all know that if M. Thiers had not been so bent upon putting down a small revolution, he would not have stirred up a large one: the Commune would have been nipped in the bud at the Buttes-Chaumont on the 18th of May, 1871. The harmless folk who were looking after the famous cannons would have been only too pleased to go home.

A nation does not learn the proper use of freedom in a day. It does not understand at first sight that obedience and respect for the law are two virtues indispensable to every one who wishes to get on tolerably under a democracy: it is for the Government to teach it its lesson. To do this properly, an authority is wanted which shall be vigilant, while making itself felt as little as possible.

This liberty should be the monopoly of no one, but the privilege of each and all. Every time our *commissaires de police* pounce upon a red flag and tear it up, every time they suppress a Catholic school, or force open the doors of a convent, the fruits of many a month's lessons are lost. We go back; but the cause of the white or red flag is advanced.

Why is Roman Catholicism perfectly powerless in England, politically speaking?

Because Protestant England allows the Romanists to open as many churches, schools, and convents as they please.

All that England demands from those who live on her hospitable soil is respect for her laws. Monarchs exiled by their subjects, and Communists, Nihilists, Socialists, exiled by their monarchs, may jostle one another in her streets any day: the individual liberty of the revolutionary subject being held as sacred as that of the ex-monarch.

Our neighbour's eccentricities are but the natural fruit of liberty; and these same eccentricities, which amuse us so much, in England pass unnoticed. Everyone does as he pleases, and thinks it quite natural that others should do the same. I have seen young girls on tricycles make their way through a crowd, without an unpleasant remark or a joke being indulged in at their expense. The men made way, and allowed them to pass without remarking them more than if they had been on horseback.

Do not fear the abuse of liberty; among an intelligent race good sense will always take the upper hand.

Liberty is sure to lead to a few excesses; but it does not suffer because of them.

Take England again.

English religious liberty is in no wise in danger because the law tolerates, nay, protects, the rowdy proselytes of the Booth family. True religion may suffer, but not religious liberty.

The right of association is not in danger because a *philanthropic* club has been formed at Ashpull, in Lancashire, by men who subscribe to defray the costs, when one of their number is fined for ill-treating his wife.*

No, no, these eccentricities do but prove the vital force of England.

There is no need to penetrate deeply into French and English life, to study the tempers of the two nations.† The streets of London and Paris furnish the observer with ample materials every day.

In the month of April, 1884, I was one day on the top of the Odeon omnibus. In the Boulevard des Italiens some repairs were going on, and at the corner of the Rue de Richelieu there was such a crowd of carriages as to cause a block. The question then arose, who was to pass first, those who came from

* The society in question is described in the English newspapers of the 19th of December, 1884.

† See Appendix (D).

the Madeleine or those who came from the Bastille. An altercation soon arose between the drivers, and that in a vocabulary which I will spare my readers. Meanwhile, the string of carriages lengthened, and the matter was becoming serious. At last up comes a *gardien de la paix*, who gets the situation explained to him, forthwith enters into a discussion with the drivers, and tries to make the Madeleine party understand that it is their place to give way. He might as well have talked to the pavement. A hubbub uprose on all sides enough to make one's hair stand on end. Everybody was in the right, it seemed, and the poor *gardien de la paix*, tired of seeing his parliamentary efforts so fruitless, withdrew, saying: "Very well, then, do as you please; I'll have nothing more to do with it" (*sic*). About a quarter of an hour later, we turned into the Rue de Richelieu.

And now here is a scene which you may witness every day in any part of London.

In every spot, where the traffic is great, you will see a policeman. He is there to regulate the circulation of the vehicles, and protect the foot passengers who may wish to cross the road. In the discharge of this duty, all that he has to do is to lift his hand, and, at this gesture, the drivers stop, like a company of soldiers at the word "halt!" Not a murmur, not a sign of impatience, not a word.

When the little accumulation of foot passengers has safely crossed, the policeman lowers his hand, and everything is in motion again.

How many times as I have looked on at this sight, which to the English appears so natural, have I said enviously to myself: "If these English people are free, if they are masters of half the world, and of themselves into the bargain, it is because they know how to obey!"

I know the favourite explanation of these striking contrasts: the temperaments are different; the blood does not circulate in English veins with so much impetuosity as it does in French ones. This is true, though only to a certain extent. But be not deceived: it is the difference which exists between the education of the two races that is the real solution of the problem, and if this little volume does not succeed in showing it, I have wasted my time, and have made you waste yours, my dear compatriots.

XVII.

THE SCHOOL.

(Notes on Education in France and England.)

UPON his arrival in the world, the English baby is not strapped, and swathed, and coddled until he is sent to school. He is not so muffled up that he is bound to take cold every time he puts his little nose out of doors; he is not stuffed with sweetmeats, and it is not by giving him the stomach-ache that his parents show him how much they love him.

He is sent to school alone, and an English boy of ten years of age would feel insulted if you proposed to have him accompanied by a servant.

At school, he works less than we do, but he is free and gets more play. His food is abundant, and consists of good slices of beef and mutton, and not of mysterious sauce with a few haricots swimming about in it, *rari nantes in gurgite vasto.*

"Cricket and pudding" is the motto of young England, and the basis of an English education: *mens sana per stomachum sanum*, and the prodigious increase of the English race is rather to be attributed to the small number of deaths among children, than to the large number of births.

Is there a sadder spectacle than the sight of our poor schoolboys out for a walk, marching two by two in silence, accompanied by their watch-dog, an ignorant *déclassé*, who is always at their side to represent the brute force of authority?

How many times, at the sight of the intelligent-looking heads, the bright, open faces of those handsome lads, who are treated like convicts at an age when life overflows, have I felt my heart moved with indignation and pity?

O my fair and beloved country, is it possible that you, so generous, intelligent, and *chevaleresque*, seek to found a democracy by bringing up your children like slaves?

Do you not see that you are sowing seeds of rebellion in those young hearts; that you are making young Revolutionaries, and not Republicans? Do you not see that, by giving them that complete

liberty which schoolboys enjoy in England, you would put a stop to their constant craving after freedom? Do you not know that your schools are cradles of revolution, and that, if you wish youth to be peaceful and quiet, you must let it be free? Does it not strike you that, instead of altering your Governments and the names of your streets, it is the barrack system of your schools that you should alter? In a word, do you not understand that, if childhood be the right time for beginning to learn everything, it must be the right time for learning the use of liberty, and that, if you wait until he is twenty to give a man that liberty, he is most likely to make bad use of it? You must go into the water to learn to swim, and you must be free to learn the proper use of freedom.

You think you have solved the problem of education by shutting up boys under bolt and bar, and you cry: "*Teneo lupum auribus!*" But the "*Teneo lupum auribus*" theory is the theory of *Reculer pour mieux sauter.* One may hold the wolf by the ears for some time, but I do not know that it is a particularly comfortable position, for the moment will come when he must be let free, and then the wolf, being provoked, exasperated, famished, the position is graver than it was at the moment of his capture.

But I am preaching to converts, for everyone in France is aware that, though we can teach youth, we do not know how to bring it up. But what is the use of being a convert, if one does not put one's belief into practice? Is it so impossible to carry out the wish of the country? Would that my voice were more eloquent and more powerful! I fancy that I could show that the difficulty is not so insurmountable as it appears.

As a matter of fact, in the provinces there is no difficulty at all. The streets contain no pitfalls for young men.

There remains the question of Paris.

Paris is much less immoral than London, and I have no fear of being contradicted when I say that its streets are far safer. And yet, from the age of eleven, the boys of Westminster, St. Paul's, King's College, and University College, &c., go to school alone every day, sometimes from a considerable distance. In the dinner hour they are free: some go to restaurants, others eat a sandwich in the playground, and take a walk afterwards. When the afternoon classes commence, never one is found wanting from his place. Do you think the English boy does not love pleasure just as much as the French one? If he returns to his place, it is because he sees no pleasure

in eating fruit which is not forbidden, and also because he knows that if he were caught playing truant and punished for it, he would not be a hero in the eyes of his school-fellows, but simply a fool, and the laughing-stock of them all.

Let us even admit, if you will, that, to begin with, Paris would not offer security enough to youth. What is to hinder our five or six great *lycées* from being rebuilt in the environs of Paris, at Meudon, or Montmorency, in the midst of fields and woods, and near to the Seine? I guarantee that the sites of the old buildings would fetch a price which would cover the cost both of new sites and new buildings. There, the supply of fresh air would no longer be stinted; there, you need not impose silence upon the lads; you would open wide the school gates, and give them the run of the fields, after having talked to them somewhat in this fashion:

"My young friends, you are citizens of a great, free nation. From to-day you enter into possession of that liberty, which we consider as yours by right. We do not doubt that you will prove by your honourable conduct that it is unnecessary to watch your movements, either in play time or school hours. The doors are open, you are free to go where you will."

And you would see that all the little band would

no longer look upon an infraction of the rules as almost an act of heroism, but as behaviour unworthy of a gentleman. They would obey instinctively, and not from fear of punishment; you would have created in these young hearts a proper feeling of self-respect, and a love of what is right.

If, however, there should be among the troop a good-for-nothing subject, who, instead of appreciating your treatment, profited by the liberty which you gave him to disgrace himself, impress upon him the gravity of his offence, and if he prove incorrigible and unworthy to live among free subjects, send him away.

If he be a young rascal of twelve or thirteen, away with sentimentalism:

Cane him.

But young England is aristocratic, some French Republicans will, perhaps, exclaim. I admit it, but you must take the word *aristocratic* in its best sense. It is aristocratic in so far that it does nothing which can cause it to be confounded with the vulgar herd. This kind of pride is born of liberty itself: young England is aristocratic because it is free. Shut in by the high walls of his prison, the poor French school-boy is only too prone to compare himself to the different classes of society

which he considers persecuted—that is, the inferior classes; and he shows his sympathy with them by adopting the ideas of an ignorant democracy, and by expressing them in language which would be repugnant to his dignity if he were free.

What is the result obtained by the boarding-school system, as it is practised in France? In the courtyards, conversations which would make us older men blush with shame; in the class-rooms, behind dictionaries, the clandestine reading of books which in us would only excite feelings of profound disgust; at the termination of school life, men of twenty, who have to learn, at their own risk and peril, what it is to be free.

If an English school-boy were to make use of such expressions as are only too often heard in the yards of our *lycées*, do not imagine that there would be any need for a master to punish him: his school-fellows would shun him as they would the plague, and he would soon be cured.

He would be set down as no gentleman, as a "cad." Thus would his case be settled.

I know cases of English school-boys being "boycotted" because they dropped their *h*'s, an unpardonable offence in England.

Self-respect and the love of what is correct, those qualities which the well-born Englishman acquires

as soon as he has left the cradle, and which he develops at school, are calculated to inspire in him the noblest kind of pride, the pride that prevents a man from doing a base action, to render him worthy of the title of gentleman, and make him act up to the old device: *noblesse oblige.*

There exists no nation in which the love of the beautiful and the just are better developed than in the French, and that, too, from the tenderest age. Why fear to grant French children the liberty which would give fresh scope to their generous qualities?

Ah! let no one think to democratise young spirits by huddling them into bear gardens, where they learn to suffer in common.

And our girls!

I know what the mothers will say, when they are advised to give their daughters their liberty:

"My dear sir, I am perfectly of your opinion: the freedom allowed to English girls is a splendid thing, and does not prevent them from making good wives and mothers—rather the contrary. But what can I do? Your theory is a very good one, but do you think I am going to be the first to put it in practice?"

Powerful objection!

It is the old story of the cat and the mice: who shall hang the bell around pussy's neck?

Many a treatise has been written on the bringing up of girls. Fénelon himself wrote a splendid one .... I have heard, for I only know it by reputation.

Alas! books upon such a subject are as useless as those which purport to teach us riding, swimming, dancing, fencing, and other arts which are only to be learned by practice.

When our boys and girls are able to frequent each other's society without astonishment, thanks to the liberty accorded to them from infancy, then, and not till then, shall we have solved the difficult problem.

Seeing that young people of opposite sexes are allowed to whirl round a ball-room in each other's arms, it really seems preposterous that they should not be permitted to meet together in the fields, to play at lawn-tennis or croquet.

The French mother, who, I repeat for the hundredth time, is the tenderest and most devoted of mothers, plays a highly ridiculous part with regard to her daughter. It would seem as if, in exercising an untiring, incessant watch over the girl, and turning herself into a veritable Argus, she had but one aim, that of being able one day to say

to her son-in-law, as she sheds a few rather grotesque tears:

"Here is my daughter: I know she is almost a stranger to you, for I have never allowed you to speak to her of your love, but I can answer for her purity and innocence. I have read all her letters, watched her every movement. She has never been out alone. If she only crossed the road to get an item at the draper's, my maid, a most reliable person, always went with her. Yes, my daughter is as innocent as a lamb. I trust to you to make her happy: she is yours."

No, dear madame, it is not enough that you should be able to make this feeling little speech to your son-in-law.

Your daughters are pure, we know that perfectly well; but it would be much better that you should not have to answer for it yourself. That purity, which constitutes their worth, is a possession which is still dearer to them than to you, and ought to be quite safe in their own keeping.

This system, which consists in one person answering for the virtue of another, is defective.

I assure you that we men should much prefer to be able to make acquaintance somewhat with the woman we contemplate marrying; and allow us to tell you that, if you consider us worthy to become the husbands of your daughters, it is rather strange

that you should not have confidence enough in us to permit us a little conversation with them in the drawing-room. It is neither complimentary to your daughters nor ourselves.

Give us the right to conduct our love affairs "as the Grand Monarch conducted the affairs of the State."

I am aware that this system would have its drawbacks.

For instance, there would be nothing mysterious about it, and Cupid delights in mystery.

Never mind that.

There may be a little less romance, but there will be more common sense.

No more letters invariably written at midnight! No longer will our young lovers cry: "All is known! we are lost!"

On the contrary, when their secret is known, it will be all plain sailing, and they will be sent to the *mairie*, to enter their names in the matrimonial register.

The favourite phrase of our Romeos and Juliets: "How I love you! Would that I could die now!" would be changed into, "I love you: when shall we get married?"

What! you love each other, and you want to die! But, adorable geese that you are, it is just the very time to wish to live.

You can be happy without having a thousand a year. Marry while you are young, my dear compatriots; make love marriages.

And you, fair daughters of France, marry the hero of your little romance, and do not wait until your mother brings forward a *serious* man as a desirable husband for you, but make your decision known early.

Rebel against the matrimonial market-system, which you now submit to without murmuring or astonishment.

What, a dot is demanded with you! *Ces messieurs* lavish no end of money on women who are not worthy to lift their eyes in your presence, and you consent to pay ready money, and in advance, too, for the honour of bestowing yourself for life! The idea is enough to make you indignant.

Have you not beauty, youth, and virtues? Is this little capital to count for nothing? Set a proper store by it, and see if it has not the market value of a young and handsome husband.

Do not allow it to count for nothing; do not fear to use all the artillery of Love's arsenal, to obtain the young hero of your dreams, and when your mother says: "You love him very much, then?" do not answer timidly: "I don't know, mamma." Say plainly: "Yes, it is he whom I mean to marry, and no other."

Then if she should offer you a notary, who would be happy to have your dot to pay for his practice, and would not object to taking you into the bargain, answer: "My dear mamma, I am not a doll for sale. If *M. le Notaire* pleases you, you should try to find him a wife of a suitable age."

Take a husband who wishes to begin life with you, and refuse point-blank an old husband who wants a nurse.

And when you are married, let your smiles and wiles all be directed to the object of reminding your husband, from time to time, that you are the dearest little woman in the world.

Surround yourself with a band of rosy, round-faced, robust children, full of life and energy, and be to them what your country women have always been, the best of mothers.

Marriages of inclination, contracted in youth, such is the foundation of strong and healthy families.

XVIII.

THE WORSHIP OF THE GOLDEN CALF.

NOTHING is done for mere glory in England, every undertaking has a practical aim.

In France, every intelligent boy of the middle class goes through his classical studies; even though he may only be intended for a commercial career, his father makes him try to pass his B.A. or B.Sc. In England, boys learn Latin and Greek in order to pass examinations, which lead to certain positions. With us, education is an indispensable ornament; here, it is a means to an end. Thus, though primary education may be much more widely spread in England, higher education is much more widely spread in France.

It is at school that young England begins to learn to make genuflections before the Golden Calf. The best prizes awarded in the large public schools are prizes of money. These establishments grant exhibitions of from £40 to £100 a year, during four or five years, to the best of the pupils

who leave them to go to the Universities of Oxford or Cambridge.

This scholarship system would be admirable if its object was to help the sons of poor * parents to continue their studies at the Universities; but such is not the case: these scholarships are constantly awarded, either through competitive examination, or through the personal interest of a governor, to sons of rich parents. And yet, these scholarships were founded by charitable persons, who bequeathed money to be applied to the education of the intelligent sons of poor parents. At present, the scholarships of the great schools of the City are at the disposal of the City Companies, who have monopolised them for their families and friends, for charity is organised on an immense scale in England, especially that well-ordered kind which begins at home.

The consequence of this state of things is that John Bull, that unsurpassed payer of taxes, is obliged to keep up Board schools in London at an enormous expense. If the great City schools fulfilled the purpose for which they were established by their "pious founders," school rates would be reduced by one-half.

* In our National Schools (*Ecoles Communales*), the prizes often take the form of sums of money, which are deposited in the Savings Bank in the child's name.

"No money, no Englishman."

The Royal Academy is closed on Sundays: no free day.

The now annual exhibitions at South Kensington are closed on Sundays. No free entry during the week.

The Zoological Gardens are, as a matter of fact, open free on Sundays . . . . but only for the well-to-do classes, who may obtain special orders from the Fellows of the Zoological Society.

All the museums are closed on Sundays.

There is no place for the poor at the banquet of life in England.

Not even at church; for I maintain that the man or woman whose clothes were not what is called here *decent*, would be turned away from the door: what the pastors want are sheep who will take a pew by the year, and put silver pieces on the plate.

And people marvel, or rather lament, that the workman, who has worked all the week, and has no home fit to spend his Sunday in, spends it at the public-house.

But where is he to go? The English, who are generally so sensible, are curiously inconsistent in this matter.

I have seen, in English illustrated papers, pictures

of Sunday in London and Sunday in Paris. The first represented a dirty mob of men and women, drinking, quarrelling, and fighting; the second, groups of workmen, accompanied by their wives, their children, and their old parents, in contemplation before the pictures in the Louvre.

This was doing us justice for once.

Intelligent and liberal England is moving heaven and earth to get the museums thrown open to the people on Sundays. The Prince of Wales, and the leaders of all the aristocracies of the country, are at the head of the movement; but all the little narrow-minded and bigoted world is leagued against them, and it is not probable that they will succeed.

Meanwhile, the London taverns remain open, which proves that the English bigots consider gin and beer more powerful moral stimulants than the master-pieces of great artists; such appears also to be the decided opinion of the bishops, who never fail to attend at the House of Lords in full force when the subject is coming on for discussion.

England erects her statues to the nobility and to finance. You see, England's great literary men were so numerous, that they had to be relegated to a corner of Westminster Abbey, for fear they should hinder circulation in the streets. With the

aid of a guide-book, you may succeed in discovering the tablets erected to their memory by a not too grateful country. Thackeray, the immortal author of "Vanity Fair," is rewarded with a tablet about a foot square. But, then, if you will take a walk around the Stock Exchange, you will see the third statue of the Duke of Wellington, and one of Peabody, the millionaire. In a little narrow City street, a bust of Milton, in an obscure niche, reminds the passer-by that the author of "Paradise Lost" was born in that place. It is comparatively unnoticed. In the wild, headlong, guinea chase, there is no time for trifling! Paris has a *Rue Milton*, to make up for it.

YET this thirst for gold has been the greatest civilising power of modern times. It is this which has opened up new markets for commerce in the remotest corners of the world. This British Empire, which has been called a brazen colossus with feet of clay, is the greatest empire it was ever given to man to found.

In a hundred years time, Australia will probably be a strong and independent Republic, a second America; but the separation will mean no loss of prestige or of profit to England; her commerce

will not suffer; her steamboats will continue to ply between London and Sydney, as they do between Liverpool and New York.

Who would dare to compare the greater number of England's conquests to those sterile ones that only survive in man's memory by the tears and blood that they have caused to flow?

"We are a wonderful people," cries General Gordon, in his *Diary at Khartoum*; "it was never our Government which made us a great nation; our Government has ever been the drag on our wheels. England was made by adventurers, not by her Government; and I believe she will only hold her place by adventurers."

This is true enough.

They were adventurers, who were the first to set foot on the soil of those remote regions which have been added one by one to the list of England's colonies; but if England is a great nation, it is thanks to heroic deeds, such as thine, great advanced sentinel of modern civilisation, who for months couldst unaided keep hordes of barbarians in check; it is thanks to heroes of thy stamp, poor Gordon!

England conquers by the railway. She imposes

her civilisation and her commerce in the countries she subdues, puts the natives in the way of earning money, and sensibly takes care to make her yoke felt as little as possible. Her commercial power makes her indispensable to the rest of the world, including the shareholders of the Suez Canal Company, to whom she pays more than three times as much as all the other powers put together.

That which makes the strength of this colonial empire, is that each colony, like each child in the mother-country, serves the apprenticeship of life in the enjoyment of liberty.

As each colony becomes rich enough to suffice unto itself, and strong enough to defend itself, England says to the colonists: "You are now big enough to manage for yourselves, it is time you learnt to do without my help." This is what the Englishman says to his sons, as they come to man's estate. The colony forms its government, chooses its ministers, and its parliament; sends representatives to England to watch over its interests there, and becomes, as it were, a branch house of that immense firm, known in every

* England makes colonies for the exportation of her goods and for her surplus population; France makes colonies for the wholesale exportation of her officials. In Annam, there are 1,000 French Colonists, 4,500 French soldiers, and 2,000 French officials.

latitude, under the name of "John Bull and Company."

All forms of worship will lend themselves to exaggeration, and develop eccentricities, and most certainly it is not the worship of the Golden Calf that is an exception to the rule. Let us look at the question from this side as well as the other.

Everyone must remember the lamentations of the Madagascar Missionary, Mr. Shaw.* The reverend gentleman had been parted from his flock, and obliged to take pot-luck on board the late Admiral Pierre's vessel. What meant those jeremiades? Was it apologies he wanted? Not a bit of it! This apostle wanted cash. From the day that he received £1,000 from the French Government not a word more was heard from him. He was quiet and happy.

£1,000 for having eaten a few bad dinners! It does not fall to everyone's share to dine so satisfactorily as that.

Although the labour of preparing the posthumous works of Victor Hugo for publication will be enormous, his literary executors have refused to accept the profits, sure to be immense, which the poet meant should be the reward of their arduous task. But the thought of receiving money for such a labour of love is odious to them. English people

See Appendix (E.).

may look upon this as sentimentality, but it compares very favourably with the highly practical proceedings of Thomas Carlyle's literary executor.

M. H——, the French *député*, who obtained 10,000 francs damages the other day, in Paris, from an individual who had insulted his wife, gave the money to the poor the very same day. It is a fact that, in France, no man, jealous of his honour, would pocket such gains.

"But," you will say, "surely, the Reverend Mr. Shaw gave his £1,000 to the poor, or to some good cause——?"

You little know the type.

In England, it is only too much the fashion to carry everything to the bank—an insult, a kick, the loss of a lover, the faithlessness of a wife, all possible inconveniences: the almighty guinea consoles for every wrong, and may be offered to anyone.

On his wedding day (January 28, 1885), the Rev. Stephen Gladstone, Vicar of Hawarden, and son of the Prime Minister of England, received, among his numerous wedding presents, a cheque for a hundred pounds from Dr. Sir Andrew Clark, and another for the same sum from the Duke of Westminster. The thing was so natural that not a single English paper commented on the fact.

In France, such a wedding present could only be

offered to a domestic who had served us faithfully for some time.

The following anecdote dates from the year 1882.

I was in France, spending a few days with a farmer in the heart of the country.

Dressed in a blouse and a large straw hat, I was one day taking a walk on the main road, when an Englishman, accompanied by a young lad of fifteen, accosted me, and asked which was the shortest way to the village of M——.

Delighted to see an Englishman, I volunteered all the information that was at my command. I even offered to accompany him as far as the lane which led to M——, and he willingly accepted.

After racking my brains to give my Englishman every detail I could think of concerning the interesting village he was about to visit, I proposed to turn back.

He, after having uttered a formidable "Aoh" for all thanks, went on his way.

I had spoken in French. I always like to make Englishmen speak French when I meet them in France. It is my little revenge.

I will admit that in my rustic attire, I could not have looked much of a dandy; but, in France, we

have still preserved that good old habit of saying "Thank you" even to our inferiors.

The Briton had simply treated me as he would have a City policeman who had told him his way.

I called him back.

"*Excusez-moi,*" I said.

"*Aoh! mon ami, oui... je savé ce que vo—volé... je demandé pardonne.*"

And, without another word, he drew from his pocket a fifty-centime piece, which he slipped into my hand.

As you must always keep what an Englishman gives you a chance of pocketing, I did not hesitate to put the fifty centimes in a safe place.

This done, I said to him in English:

"My dear Sir, let me give you a piece of advice. When you have got a Frenchman to talk himself hoarse to explain you your way, just thank him."

"Why, Sir, you speak English . . . ."

He was immediately all apologies.

"Above all," I continued, "never offer money in this country before you are quite sure it will be acceptable. You might have it thrown in your face," I added laughing.

My Englishman held out his hand, as if to receive back his fifty centimes.

"Oh! with me," I said to him, "there is no danger. I have lived a long while in England,

and I am pretty business-like by this time. I never throw money out of window or in people's faces . . . . I put it in my pocket."

My practical ideas won me his esteem. We laughed heartily over the adventure, and parted the best of friends.

MR. PARNELL, the leader of the Home Rule party, whose disciples have gone like silly sheep to the slaughter in Dublin, last year accepted a token of Irish gratitude, which took the rather fascinating form of a purse containing £40,000. This sum had been subscribed by his starving country.

The profession of agitator in the United Kingdom is not to be despised, as you see.

What wouldst thou have thought of this, great Garibaldi? And thou, poor Manin, who didst fain give Italian lessons to support thyself?

You, Barbès and Blanqui, proud, valiant souls, Utopists inflamed with an ardent and honest zeal, and you all, martyrs in causes good or bad, you had at least the courage to go and suffer in damp dungeons, the decency to die in a workhouse or behind a barricade!

But Mr. Parnell is a sensible patriot, a round

and rubicund agitator. He is most likely to die quietly in his bed. There are certain heroes for whom insurance companies do not raise their premiums.

Poor gullible humanity!

Anywhere but in Great Britain, an agitator of the Parnell stamp would be hooted in the streets.

After having beaten the Ashantees, in 1874, brought home the umbrella of their king, and burnt their capital, a feat not requiring much talent, the dwellings being built of wood and straw, General Wolseley, on his return to England, had a grant of £25,000 made to him. Eight years later, on his return from Egypt, this same general received a peerage and £28,000. Lord Alcester, his companion in arms, who had operated on the walls of Alexandria, whilst he was operating on the backs of the Egyptians, also obtained a peerage and £30,000. When I consider that during the siege of Alexandria, the English had only three men put *hors de combat*, it occurs to me that doubtless these rewards were granted to Lord Alcester at the suggestion of the British Royal Humane Society.

And yet General Roberts, the history of whose celebrated march to Candahar will remain written in letters of gold among the records of the great

military feats of the present century, had to content himself with the Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath.

General Wolseley, now Baron of Cairo, a name so grotesque that he has never yet cared to assume it in public, was sent back to the Soudan at the end of last year to deliver Gordon, that modern *chevalier sans peur et sans reproche.* The perspective was tempting: there was every prospect of an ample harvest of honours and bank-notes. Unfortunately, the Mahdi cut the grass under the general's feet, and he arrived too late. Poor Gordon had to die, not to save his country, but to become, and for ever remain, a spectre at England's feast, the victim of her vacillations, a standing reproach to her indifference.

Gordon and Wolseley! to think that, by the irony of fate, these two names should have been associated in the same campaign! The soldier saint, and the noble millionaire, whose victories are sounded with the clink of guineas.

"Look, here, upon this picture, and on this."

And you, O heroes of antiquity, arise from your long sleep, and see the progress that military art has made! Veil your faces, O Fabricius, Cincinnatus, and all you Romans, who, after you had subdued your country's foes, and drawn fettered kings behind your triumphal chariots, returned to

cultivate your fields, and died so poor that you had to be buried at the public expense!

It has long been England's practice to reward with money those who had rendered services to the country.

After the battle of Waterloo, the Duke of Wellington received, as a present from the nation, £400,000 and a palace at the entrance of Hyde Park.

With reference to the grants to the famous Duke of Marlborough, that great general, who filled the hearts of his enemies with terror, and the pockets of his family with the money of his countrymen, and whose descendants still receive from the State the sum of £4,000 a year, Swift compares, in the *Examiner*, the generosity of the Romans with the generosity of the English:

"*A Bill of Roman Gratitude.*

	£	s.	d.
For frankincense, and earthen pots to burn it in	4	10	0
A bull for sacrifice	8	0	0
An embroidered garment . . .	50	0	0
A crown of laurel	0	0	2
A statue	100	0	0
A trophy	80	0	0

A thousand copper medals, value half-penny a piece. . . .	2	1	8
A triumphal arch	500	0	0
A triumphal car	100	0	0
Casual charges at the triumph . .	150	0	0
Total	£994	11	10

"*A Bill of British Gratitude.*

	£	s.	d.
Woodstock	40,000	0	0
Blenheim	200,000	0	0
Post-office grant . . .	100,000	0	0
Mildenheim	30,000	0	0
Pictures, jewels, &c. . . .	60,000	0	0
Pall Mall grant	10,000	0	0
Employments	100,000	0	0
Total	£540,000	0	0"

John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough, was pocketing these £540,000 about the time when Flêchier, comparing Turenne to Macchabeus, was able to say of him, "that he would never accept any other reward, for the services he rendered to his country, than the honour of having served her."

It is not at the Abbey of Westminster, it is on the façade of the Bank of England that there ought to be written :

"AUX GRANDS HOMMES LA PATRIE

RECONNAISSANTE."

XIX

THE SPIRIT OF INVENTION—THE CHANNEL TUNNEL.

"If," as M. Rénan says,* "those nations which have an exceptional fact in their history, expiate this fact by long sufferings and pay for it with their national existence—if the nations that have created unique things by which the world profits often die victims of their achievements," England may hope to live a considerable time yet, for everything that she undertakes is national, never universal. She works for herself and herself alone. Whenever she is asked to co-operate in the execution of a great project of universal interest, she refuses point-blank, unless it appears quite clear to her that she alone will reap the profits and honours of the undertaking. An Englishman's sphere of action is always England and her colonies: his only aim, British interests—two magic words to his ears.

If the Channel Tunnel could be made so that it could only be used by the English, it would be commenced to-morrow.

* *La Réforme Intellectuelle et Morale.*

Lord Beaconsfield pronounced patriotism to be the most rational form of egotism. Would to Heaven it might be so interpreted in France!

When shall we cease to strive after the extraordinary and the universal? When shall we cease to concern ourselves about the happiness of the whole human race, and, minding our own business, undertake only the possible and the practical? When shall we cease to be inventors and become men of business?

There is not much discovered in England now-a-days, except new ways of dodging the arch-enemy.

Even the very Mahdi, who led John Bull such a dance, was unearthed by a Frenchman.

It is difficult to restrain a smile in reading the conventional descriptions that have been given of this curious personage, this problematic being, whom the English looked upon as a myth up to the day when he became a troublesome reality.

It was left to a Frenchman to give the world a true portrait of the Mahdi, of whom the English will only have a correct idea, when they have read the interesting lecture, delivered at the Sorbonne, on the 28th of February, 1885, by M. James Darmesteter, the learned Orientalist, which lecture has been translated into English.

Yet it was Newton who discovered the Infin-

itesimal Calculus and the laws of universal gravitation. Yet it was England that produced Shakespeare, the sublimest example of the Creator's handiwork. Yet it was Harvey who discovered the circulation of the blood. But now England is entirely given over to business; she has no time to throw away upon inventions.

For that matter, why should England go in for inventing? She has money and a genius for commerce, and, possessing these, can do without inventors, who, as a rule, die in the workhouse, with the satisfaction of knowing that shrewd men of business have made fortunes out of their discoveries.

This has always been so. Even the sublime and Divine Thinker expiated with an ignominious death the invention of a theory which, but for the meddling of speculators, would have ensured the happiness of the world. To-day He can contemplate from His celestial throne, the bishops coming out of their palaces in luxurious carriages to go to the House of Lords and vote against the opening of museums on Sundays, or on their way to the Mansion House to feast with the Lord Mayor, who gives better dinners than were to be had in Galilee, I assure you.

The world is made up of fools and knaves, such

was the judgment passed upon mankind by Thomas Carlyle, the great English historian, a rough and dyspeptic philosopher, who himself, however, was neither a knave nor a fool. This writer, who passed his life in insulting his countrymen one after another, who could make love to his wife by correspondence when she was far away, but who never found an amiable word to say to her when she was near, this same Thomas Carlyle has calumniated the world. Where should we be without the few disinterested heroes who have devoted themselves to the amelioration of their fellow-creatures, and who, in return, have received but poverty and prison, torture and death? The men who have suffered for country, religion, science, liberty: are these Carlyle's fools?

SINCE we are on the chapter of inventions, why not say a word or two on the subject of the Channel Tunnel?

England seems at present resolved to keep France at the respectful distance of a *mal de mer*.

English national spirit is narrow, but once more, where is the national spirit that is not? Is not a national spirit a collection of beliefs, nay even prejudices, which the world at large cannot accept?

The Channel Tunnel is an idea.

The Frenchman, in his impetuosity, cries:

"Here is an idea, let us put it into immediate execution."

The Englishman with his cool head says simply: "Here is an idea, let us think over it." Do not laugh at the English, because they undertake nothing without having first weighed the consequences. Do not laugh at the English, because they would not have declared war with Germany, who had 1,200,000 men ready to take the field, without being sure of having some chance of success.

As a Frenchman, I admire Mr. John Bright and a few other Englishmen, who are ready to give their consent to the construction of the tunnel; but when I see the most illustrious men of this country raise their voices against the enterprise, I am led to reflect.

The English attribute their security, and with reason, to the fact of their inhabiting an island. The most fanatic among them see in the geographical position of their country the finger of God. It is perfectly certain that, thanks to it, England can do without a large army, and throw into the arts and commerce all the intellectual and moral strength of the nation. There are a hundred thousand chances to one against France ever

trying to invade England; but this one chance is just one too many, says the Englishman in his patriotic egotism.

Seriously speaking, I think the utility of this tunnel has been exaggerated in France, as its dangers have been exaggerated in England. It is a work of art rather than a good speculation, and the French look at the question from the artist's, the English from the capitalist's, point of view.

Then there remains the question of sea-sickness, you will say. Alas! I see nothing in this that is likely to be of much help in the solution of the problem. When two parties sign a contract, it is because they each see in it advantages, which are about equal. Now the English do not suffer much from sea-sickness, whereas most French people begin to feel qualmish as soon as they come in sight of the boat that is going to take them across the Channel: so the contract does not offer to the English, on this point, the advantages which it offers to the French. If this tunnel is ever to be made, the English will have first to be better convinced of its usefulness to themselves: until they are so convinced, I feel sure they will not abandon their natural fortification, that moat always full, which they look at as the gift of the gods, and change their dear island into a peninsula.

I confess that, for my own part, if the Channel Tunnel existed, I should still take the boat. I hate the smut and dust of railways, and, in my eyes, that which makes the charm of the journey from Paris to London, is the change of atmosphere, to feel the sea-breeze, and inhale pure air for a couple of hours.

What nonsense there has been written on the subject of this submarine tunnel, to be sure! One of the most important Parisian papers the other day made the following remark:

"The present generation will never see the achievement of the tunnel, because England's antipathy for France, for her institutions, for her ideas, for her genius even, will always prevent an English Parliament from sanctioning the realisation of a project, which, in facilitating communication, would show the world the real inferiority of the United Kingdom. . . . England is determined to remain isolated . . . her extreme selfishness wills it thus . . . her legislators are more or less interested in shunning foreign competition for their manufactures."

I confess that it surprised most people not a little to see Mr. Chamberlain, in the name of a Liberal Government, pronounce against the second reading of the Bill. Mr. Chamberlain, who has

the honour of representing Birmingham in the British Parliament—Mr. Chamberlain, the most independent member of Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet, gave the world a sad spectacle in lending his name to a narrow-minded policy. Those who have the honour of being colleagues of Mr. John Bright should not play the parts which Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett has made peculiarly his own. But when one sees a serious paper pretending that England will have nothing to do with a Channel Tunnel, because "she fears competition for her trade and manufactures," it is enough to take one's breath away. What! England fears competition for her trade and manufactures! But England is the only country which does not hinder trade by prohibitive laws. Is it not known in France that free trade exists in England, and in England only? If we are protectionists in France, it is we who fear competition, and not the English. I do not say that we are wrong to be protectionists, nor do I say that we are right; but, at any rate, it is going a little too far to suppress known facts, in order to plead one's own cause to one's own fancy. But when a man is bent upon disparaging a neighbouring country, he will not allow a fact or two to stand in his way. If the facts are not favourable to his arguments, so much the worse for the facts; they must give way.

The English are quite as amusing as we are, I can tell you. Listen, and judge for yourself.

An English paper asserted in so many words, at the beginning of this year, that the French were *jealous* of the success of the English in Egypt!

Oh! the dear neighbours! How entertaining they are!

M. Berbier, a French engineer, has submitted to the Postmaster-General of Paris a scheme for connecting that city and London by an enormous tube, through which letters and parcels would be sent by compressed air. It would take an hour to send letters, parcels, etc., from the one capital to the other by this novel method.

The idea is a bright one and thoroughly French: but as it comes, like that of the Channel Tunnel, from a Frenchman, I fear very much that John Bull may look askance at it, as a new dodge of the wily neighbour for coming over on all fours, since he has no more hope of coming over upright through the now vetoed submarine tunnel.

You will see that this will be the opinion of His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge, Field-Marshal, Commander-in-Chief of Her Majesty's forces . . . in time of peace.

XX.

WOMAN WORSHIP.

A WORSHIPPER of grace and beauty, the Frenchman has given to woman a place which she occupies in no other nation.

Since the days when Aspasia inspired Socrates and advised Pericles, in no other country has woman's sovereignty been so supreme as it has always been, and still is, in France.

The Frenchman is keenly alive to woman's influence, and woman is an ever-present, a fixed, idea with him. Whether he study her from the artistic, physiological, or psychological point of view, his interest in her is never exhausted.

It is a case of woman worship.

Parodying Terence's lines, he says:

"I am a man, and all that concerns woman interests me."

Nothing is more absurd in the eyes of the English than this ever-present idea of woman in the mind of the Frenchman, and as our dear

neighbours do not know us any better than if an ocean, instead of a silver streak, separated us and them, they indulge in a thousand and one commentaries upon the puerility of our character.

However, it is to our education, and to that alone, that this weak but charming side of our national character must be attributed.

If, from the tenderest age, we were used to liberty and the companionship of children of the other sex, we should grow up thinking very little about liberty and women, and we should succeed in acquiring that *sang-froid* which is the foundation-stone of the prosperity and the greatness of the Anglo-Saxon race.

When we were school-boys, and a rumour spread through the class-rooms that the sister of So-and-So was in the parlour, do you remember, my dear compatriots, what a commotion it created throughout the whole establishment? Do you remember how we climbed on tables and chairs, and how happy we were if we could but catch sight of the corner of a petticoat at the other end of the court-yard? No wonder, for, to us, a girl was quite an extraordinary being, something almost supernatural. The scream of the young ladies of Miss Tomkins' Seminary, on hearing that "a man is behind the door!" is nothing, compared to the magic cry, "*Une fille!*" in a French school.

Is not the object of man's worship always something unknown, extraordinary, ideal? Is it not always clothed in mystery? Have we ever bestowed unlimited admiration upon those whose society we frequent every day? Habit kills admiration,* as it kills all sentiments that live upon illusions. If, from our childhood, woman were the companion of our daily games and walks, should we not look upon her with different eyes?

To us Frenchmen, woman is a being whom we consider greatly superior to ourselves, because we have made an ideal of her.

To the Englishman, woman is a creature whom he looks down upon as a frail and frivolous being, greatly inferior to himself. With what an air of sovereign condescension the English school-boy tells his young girl friends all about the game of football or cricket, in which he has taken part! His manner seems to say: "Is it not awfully kind of me to take the trouble to enter into these details with poor, puny creatures like you, who cannot appreciate them?"

In France, whatever a woman does is right; even her errors almost turn to her advantage. If she breaks her marriage vows, it is not she who is

* I take the word "admiration" in the Latin sense of "wonder."

covered with shame, it is her husband who is covered with ridicule; and people immediately look for defects in him, and excuses for her.

A society, thus governed by women may lack firmness, but its salient points are sure to be good taste, delicacy, tact, wit, and amiability.

It is impossible not to mention here the ascendency which women took over French literature, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and during the early part of the present one, through the influence of the *salons littéraires*. Does it not seem, in fact, as if the history of French literature might be summed up by naming the Hôtel de Rambouillet, and the *salons* of Madame des Loges, Mademoiselle de Scudéry, Madame de Sablé, Ninon de Lenclos, Madame Scarron, the Duchesse du Maine, the Marquise de Lambert, Madame du Deffand, Madame d'Epinay, Madame de Caylus, Madame de Vintimille, Madame Récamier, Madame de Staël, and Madame Girardin? Do we not know the courts of Louis XIV., Louis XV., Louis XVI., and Napoleon I. by the letters and memoirs of this splendid legion of women belonging to "*la société polie*," who have taught us the art of *causer*, that art of which we French have the monopoly?

This woman worship, from which chivalry

sprang, is the source of another trait characteristic of the French nation, a trait which we have a right to be proud of. I speak of our respect for the weak. I engage that the lowest quarter of any French town would be roused into revolution at the sound of a man having ill-treated a woman or child. It is a sentiment innate in the Celt, and which would be found in the Englishman, if the Germanic element had not gained the ascendancy in England.*

Is there any prettier sight than that of our public gardens filled with well-dressed, bright-faced young mothers, whose husbands come, when business is over, to listen to the band at their side, and to take them to homes, from which care is banished as far as possible, and where they are made sharers in each joy of their husbands?

Can we imagine a pleasure party of any kind without the presence of women? And when I say *we*, I mean all classes of society. When our workman sets out, on Sunday mornings, for the Jardin de la Muette or the Bois de Mendon, with

* The Germanic hordes, which overran Gaul in the fifth century, did not succeed in changing our language or character. On the contrary, the barbarians were civilised by contact with us, and adopted our language, instead of imposing theirs upon us. In Great Britain, the case was different: the absorption was complete: from the fifth to the ninth century, the island was perfectly Germanic.

provisions for the day, he takes his wife and children with him; and even his old mother, if he have one, must go too, or the party is not complete.

I confess that those world-famed English public dinners which are not brightened by the presence of ladies have but little charm for me.

"*Les Anglais s'amusent comme nous autres Français nous nous ennuyons,*" said Madame Vigée-Lebrun.

When I say that women are rarely seen at the great public dinners, which are the distinguishing feature of English society, I exaggerate. They are sometimes admitted . . . . . to the galleries, from thence to contemplate the lords of creation consuming their prodigious repast.

Gallantry could surely go no further.

Looking from the gallant knights of the trencher to the pretty faces in the gallery, I have more than once exclaimed to myself: "Nobody can say that an Englishman's eyes are bigger than his stomach."

XXI.

FAITH AND REASON.

THE various religions in existence were founded by men of different nations to suit the character of their countrymen.

The French, impressionable and fond of pompous pageants, have adopted a mystical religion, which addresses itself to their senses; the English, cool and argumentative, have preferred a religion which addresses itself to their reason. This is why churches in France savour of the theatre, and churches in England savour of the lecture-room.

Calvinism has not taken root ir France, and never will, because it is not amiable. Romanism will never flourish in England again, because it says: "Believe, without seeking to understand."

The Roman Catholic religion aims at gaining a hold over the heart, the Protestant religion aims at gaining a hold over the mind. The first attracts

women and governs through them; the second attracts men by offering them food for their intellectual appetites.

Finally, the first is under the control of a foreign power, the second is national.

We worship a tender, merciful, almost familiar, God, whom we are wont to call *sweet* Saviour.

The English worship the God of the Jews, that God Who commanded His chosen people to exterminate their enemies, and spare neither man, woman, or child, and Whom they call *awful* God.

The manner in which we speak of the Divinity shocks the English; the manner in which the English worship Him leaves us cold and indifferent.

To the Frenchmen, who say that religion is incompatible with liberty, I would simply reply: England and America are the freest nations in the world, and at the same time the most religious—I mean the most church-going.

To the English, who say that there is no religion in France, I would reply: Our churches are not, like yours, full only from eleven to half-past twelve: they are thronged from six o'clock in the morning to one in the afternoon by a crowd whose fervour is second to that of no other church-goers, and this French piety is all the more admirable because,

in our country, religion is not an indispensable garment, as it is in England.

It would be as imprudent to judge the religion of the English from the French point of view, as it would be to judge the religion of the French from the English point of view. This being granted, something more is requisite, if we would judge fairly, and that is to start with the principle that all convictions that are dictated by conscience are worthy of respect.

But such is not the usual manner of setting about it. To call one's neighbours "idolaters," and hear oneself called "marchand de Bible" in return, is certainly much more lively.

The English have given the name of Mariolatry to the homage paid to the Mother of Christ, and it is a deep-rooted belief in England that the French pay to Mary a worship equal to that which they pay to God.

Like ourselves, they too often judge by appearances.

The divine honours paid to the Virgin Mary have nothing to do with adoration; the prayers addressed to her are for intercession. It is a poetical homage rendered chiefly by women, who would fain have the holiest of women plead with a

beloved son on their behalf. It is to her that the young girl turns who has just engaged her heart; it is to her that the young mother prays, as she bends over the cradle of her child.

"Horrible!" cry the Protestants, "as if God were not just, as if He wanted to be told what He should do!"

But since you pray to Him yourselves, it is clear that you think it advisable to remind Him sometimes of your needs.

Then the Frenchman (excuse a comparison which, to my mind, appears to be strikingly true), the Frenchman, I say, who has the love and respect for his mother inborn in him, cannot help believing that God could not find it in His heart to refuse him anything, if Mary, His mother, would only undertake to intercede on his behalf.

Such is the natural result of a religious teaching which is practised in temples adorned with statues and pictures, images of the dwellers in the realms of the blest. The uncultured mortal does not know what abstraction is. He believes in what he sees. When our peasant folk think of God, they picture Him to themselves as an august personage in a blue robe with flowing sleeves, who keeps the accounts of our good and bad actions, and receives in private audience every morning certain saints,

dressed in various colours (St. Peter invariably in bottle green), who come to talk of their *protégés*, and recommend them to His mercy.

This materialism of the other world helps the ignorant to understand, and explains why the poor crowd our churches, in the provinces at all events. I say *in the provinces* especially, for it would be as wrong to judge France by Paris, as it would be to judge England by Regent Street and the Haymarket. This is a remark that I should like to repeat at every page.

"What is it that these English people worship?" is the question invariably asked by the French who visit English churches and chapels. The fact is, there is nothing to be seen there but whitewashed walls, benches, an organ, and an enormous Bible. Tell them that, in the eyes of the English, a crucifix is a profane object, that would be looked upon with as much horror as a statue of Vishnu, and they will have their doubts whether the name of Christian really ought to be applied to an English person.

In religion, everything is spiritualised on this side of the Channel. A crucifix recalls the fact that Christ became man.

The English will have neither crucifix, statue, nor picture in their churches, because they adhere to the Bible, and there they find, among the commandments of God, given on Mount Sinai:

"Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in the heaven. Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them."

The Roman Catholic Church has suppressed this commandment. It is not for me to criticise her; but as she has adopted a certain number of commandments, which she has even translated into verse in order to fix them more easily in the minds of the faithful, she would have perhaps done better to adopt them all. At any rate, she has done wisely in interdicting discussion among her followers, and in telling them:

"Ce que je dis tu croiras
Sans raisonner auparavant."

Whereas the materialisation practised by the Roman Church attracts the lower classes, the spiritualisation of the Anglican Church tends to estrange them. The great unwashed of England would not understand the service of the Anglican Church. This is partly why cornets and drums are being resorted to, to draw them out of their slums.

Everyone takes his religion where he finds it.

Does not the frequentation of French cemeteries show how attached we are to the body?

Does not the solitude of English cemeteries show how little our neighbours share this feeling?

The Catholic is no theologian. He does not discuss the sermons that are preached to him; he may criticise the language of the preacher, but dogma is not in his line. All that is spoken from the pulpit is gospel to him.

The Protestant is essentially a theologian. He sifts most carefully all that he hears in church.* He is not of opinion that man was made for religion, but that religion was made for man. I have seen more than one storm in a tea-cup, aroused in little country towns, by a certain sermon that had appeared to the congregation to be unorthodox. The local newspapers would be full of letters containing the bitterest and most violent recriminations. The clergyman, attacked like a mere politician who had changed his colours, would defend himself by writing letter after letter to the paper. Bible in hand, he refuted the arguments of his adversaries, who were his own flock, be it understood.

No demi-gods in England: everyone has to pass through the Caudine Forks of criticism.

A young country curate, finding that his tradesmen's bills were taking larger proportions than his

* See Appendix (F.).

modest income could stand, resolved one day to thunder from the pulpit against the thirst for riches.

He prepared his thunderbolts.

Never did Horace or Bourdaloue utter such anathemas against the vices of the day.

"My dear brethren," he cried, "is it possible that you can thus place the love of filthy lucre above the love of virtue!"

And, after a few generalities, he came straight to the point: he accused the tradesmen of making too large profits, and of caring more for the things of this world than for the things of the next.

A few days later, it being the 5th of November, the curate was burnt in effigy.

His parishioners having rendered his life not worth living in the pretty little town of X——, the young reverend gentleman lost no time in packing up his traps and quitting the neighbourhood, with the firm resolution never to preach any more sermons *ad hominem*.

The Anglican, or State Church of England is a Tory institution, that is to say, an eminently Conservative one. It is also a great school of discipline for the people. As an Englishman of much good sense said to me one day, the clergyman of a small town advantageously replaces half-a-dozen policemen.

The Anglican Church is the church of English good society.

In my quality of Frenchman, I confess to having a partiality for this church, and of dreading the time when she will be separated from the State.

This is why.

If we have many sympathisers in England, they must not be looked for, as a rule, among the bigots of all the little conventicles, who vie with one another in presenting the most striking appearance of virtue and piety.

By these pretentious, narrow-minded folk, the French are more or less looked upon as children of the Evil One. The intelligent Englishmen of good society, who know and often admire us, generally belong to the Anglican Church, which takes care of their future "by special appointment," and allows them to relax a little from their natural austerity.

Nature has made the Englishman a Puritan. Churchman or not, stir him up, and it is the Puritan which rises to the surface. The day on which the Church of England is disestablished, England will be all Puritan, and France will not be able to count many friends on her shores.

XXII.

THE FRENCH SHOULD LEARN TO SPEAK ENGLISH.

SINCE the war of 1870, a reaction has taken place in France in favour of the study of modern languages, a study which had been sadly neglected up to that time.

We thought it quite natural that our neighbours should learn our language, but quite useless that we should learn theirs.

Was it vanity? No, it was merely indifference, arising from our stay-at-home character. We travelled but little, and our own language was all that we required. When we were told that the Germans, the Swedes, the Dutch, almost all spoke three or four languages, we would reply, "I am glad to hear it: much good may it do them," and we were not jealous.

We begin to travel more than we did: we are coming out of our shells, and gradually finding the need of being able to express ourselves in another language than our own.

But is it really German that we want, German that is so much insisted on at present in France?

Is it sensible to prefer it to English, which, so to speak, opens to us the door of Great Britain, America, Canada, India, Australia, New Zealand, and almost the whole commercial world?

It is true that everyone accounted for our disasters of 1870 after his own fashion. The most ingenious theories were brought forward, and we very well know why we believe it to be indispensable and patriotic to learn German.

"Ah!" cried some, "if we had only known German, we should not have been defeated." And forthwith instruction in German was decreed obligatory.

"That is not it," said others, "it is our geography, of which we did not know even the rudiments, that has been the cause of all the evil. On leaving Paris, our officers, ignorant of the meanders of the Seine, thought that they were beating a retreat each time they came to a fresh bend of that river." And the study of geography received a fillip.

Others again would have it to be that if the visors of our soldiers' *képis* had not been lifted upwards in front, the Prussians would have had a warm time of it. Down came the visors without delay.

I pass over the pious people, who saw in our disasters only the just chastisement of our faults, and will only give the opinion of Thomas Carlyle. This philosopher, whom the hazard of birth had made English, but who was a perfect German, cried out that, "Germanic virtues had triumphed over Gallic vices."

Some few worthy folks, perfectly destitute of genius, but possessing an ounce or two of common sense, attributed our defeats to the fact that the Germans had an army of 1,200,000 men, whereas our own forces scarcely numbered 250,000. I fancy it is these latter that history will show to have been in the right.

The virtuous Germans that vanquished us, were they, after all, so clever at geography and French? This is how they learnt the geography they required, and how they made themselves understood in French:

A few Uhlans would approach to within a respectful distance of a village. There they would seize upon the first peasant, old man, or child, that passed, place a pistol to his throat, and after asking, "Are there any French soldiers in your village?" would say: "Show us the way to such and such place, and tell us the names of all the people around here, who have wine in their cellars, or hay in their barns. And you had better take

care to tell the truth, or we will blow your brains out, and set fire to the four corners of your village."

Loaded pistols and lighted torches are magical quickeners of slow intellects: a deaf man would understand such arguments as these. If I took by the collar the first lad I came across in Germany, and, lifting my stick to his head, shouted into his ear: "You young rascal, I will knock your head off," I will warrant he would understand me as quickly as if I spoke the purest German.

If we have any spare time, let us learn German that we may be able to read Goethe and Schiller; if we are philologists, let us learn it, that we may extract a few clear ideas out of that confused mass, that plethora of learned works, that could be resumed into a few intelligible phrases of such writers as Messrs. Rénan, Gaston Paris, Paul Meyer, Darmesteter, and a few other savants of our young but brilliant philological school. From the practical point of view, the utility of German is but secondary. If we should ever demand of Germany the provinces that she wrenched from us, we shall find we have enough German-speaking mouths, if we can only put into the field as many mouths of cannon as Prince von Bismarck.

English is the language that it behoves us to

learn: English that will help the merchant and the traveller to make themselves understood in all quarters of the globe; the scholar to read Shakespeare and Milton.

Even though England were a bygone nation I would learn English to read Shakespeare. I ask forgiveness of my dear country, just mourning the loss of her greatest poet; but France has had no poet equal to Shakespeare, no historian equal to Gibbon; England has had no prose writer equal to Bossuet or Voltaire; but I wish I might be allowed to say, on each side of the Channel, that the two countries which have produced such illustrious men as Shakespeare, Milton, Byron, Shelley, Bossuet, Corneille, Racine, Molière, and Voltaire, two countries both ardent admirers of the grand and beautiful, might well afford themselves the luxury of speaking well of each other.

Now the English know our language and literature much better than we know theirs. There are very few, as I have said before, who speak French well, but almost the whole present generation can read a French book. French is taught everywhere, even in the Board schools. An English school-boy attaches as much value to his French prize as to any of his others, whereas in France we school-boys always had a patronising smile for the winner of the English prize: good conduct prize, prize of

encouragement, English prize, these were about equal in our estimation.

The English that was required of us at the examinations was simply laughable, and I am not very old, so that my recollections of school-life are not ancient history: merely a piece of English to put into French, with the help of a dictionary, nothing more.

In England, in all the examinations for entrance to military and naval schools, for the Indian Civil Service, in short, all competitive examinations, as much importance is attached to French as to Greek or Latin. The examiners of the London University refuse all candidates who do not show a satisfactory knowledge of the French language and literature.

French is an important part of every English gentleman's education, and whether the study of it please or plague him, he must work at it and learn it.

The examinations in French are not at all light: a piece of French to put into English, a piece of English to translate into French, no dictionary allowed, questions on grammar, philology, literature and history, and very often an essay besides. The candidate is provided with pen, ink, and paper: his wits must furnish the rest.

It is true, the average of the marks is rarely

more than half the maximum,* but as the result obtained in other subjects is not much more brilliant, I conclude that the instruction in French is of as good quality as that in the classic languages. In fact, when it is remembered that the time allotted to French in English schools, is rarely more than two or three hours a week, the result may even be considered highly satisfactory.

Yet it is sought to still improve the teaching of French, and of course everyone engaged in the profession has his ideas upon the best way of furthering this end. I took the liberty, not long since, of explaining to the English my own modest views on the subject. As these remarks upon the teaching of French in England might possibly apply to the teaching of English in France, I reproduce them in the following chapter (taking a few liberties with my text and making myself at home with it), by the kind permission of the editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, who had given me the hospitality of his columns.

* The London University awards a first-class diploma to every candidate for the MATRICULATION, who obtains half the maximum of marks obtainable in the different subjects, Greek, Latin, English, French, mathematics, natural philosophy, and chemistry.

XXIII.

A WAY OF LEARNING A MODERN LANGUAGE.

I HAVE always felt a great deal of sympathy, and even respect, for that good, honest, straightforward young British boy who does not easily understand that in French "a musical friend" is not necessarily *un ami à musique*, nor "to sit on the committee," *s'asseoir sur le comité*, unless the context indicates that it is the painful operation which is meant. Poor boy! For him, a foreign language is only his own, with another vocabulary; and so, when he does a piece of translation, he carefully replaces on his paper each word of his English text by one of the equivalent, that he finds for it in his dictionary, rarely failing to choose the wrong one. Now comes *que*. Shall he put the subjunctive or the indicative? He has learnt his grammar: he could, if occasion required, recite the rules that apply to the employment of the terrible subjunctive mood. He has even, once or twice in his life, written an exercise on the subject, and as it was

headed "Exercise on the Subjunctive Mood," he went through it with calm confidence, putting all the verbs in the subjunctive, including those that it would have been advisable to put in the indicative. This done, he was not supposed to commit any more mistakes on this important point of grammar. He might as well be expected to be an experienced swimmer after once reading Captain Webb's "Art of Swimming," and going through the various evolutions indicated in the pamphlet, *à sec* on the floor of his papa's parlour.

I admit that the French teacher of a public school ought to be a good philologist to make his lessons attractive to the students of the upper forms, and ensure their success under examination; I admit that he should know English thoroughly, to be able to explain to them the delicacies of the French language, and maintain good discipline in his classes; I admit that he should be able to teach grammar, philology, history, literature; but I maintain that he ought never to lose sight of the most important object of the study of a living language: the putting of it into practice; he should, above all things, and by all means, aim at making his pupils speak French. It is not enough that he should speak to them in French, even in the upper forms, where he would be perfectly understood: understanding a language and speaking it are two

very different things. Neither will he attain his end by means of dull manuals of imaginary conversations with the butcher, the baker, and the candlestick maker: these will at most be useful in helping a bewildered Briton to ask for what he wants at a *table d'hote*. You will not get grown up, intelligent, and educated English boys to come out of their shells, unless you make it worth their while. Now, Englishmen love argument, very often for argument's sake, and every school-boy is a member of some society or committee, and, at its meetings, tries his wings, discusses, harangues, and prepares himself for that great parliamentary life which is the strength of the nation. The pupils of the forms that correspond to our classes of *Philosophie*, *Rhétorique*, *Mathématiques Spéciales*, all belong to societies, meeting once a week to discuss together the questions of the day.

Great numbers of these debating societies have long existed in England.*

* Debating Societies are not only for the rich and enlightened classes: the taste for them is to be found in all ranks of life. In London and other large towns, even public ones exist, to which admission is obtained by payment. The subject to be discussed is posted up at the entrance of the hall, and for a shilling any passer-by may enter and take part in the discussions from which the politics of the day are not excluded, and in which the Holy Alliance itself has often been the object of irreverent jokes. (MADAME DE STAEL—LETTERS ON ENGLAND.)

Then, I ask, why not turn this love of discussion to account?

Start a debating society in every school, and you will teach your generation to speak French. Such a proposal may sound bold, but it has been tried in several public schools, and has proved a complete success.

What cannot a teacher do that has succeeded in winning the esteem and affection of his pupils? First, make them respect you, then gain their hearts, and you will lead the young by a thread.

Take twenty or thirty boys, old enough to appreciate the interest you feel in them, and say to them, "My young friends, let us arrange to meet once a week, and see if we cannot speak French together. We will chat about anything you like: politics even. Do not be afraid to open your lips, it is only *la première phrase qui coûte*. I am neither a Pecksniff, nor a pedant; a dotard, nor a wet blanket; in your company, I feel as young as the youngest among you. Do not imagine that I shall bring you up for the slightest error of pronunciation you make. I remember the time when I murdered your language, and I should be sorry to cast the first stone at you: *non ignara mali, miseris succurrere disco.* At first I shall only correct your glaring mistakes; by degrees, you will make fewer and fewer; although, alas! you will very likely

always make some. What does it matter? I guarantee that in a few months you will be able to understand all that is said to you in French, and express intelligibly in the same language any idea that may pass through your brain."

These little French parliaments work admirably; the earliest were started two or three years ago. Each has its president—the head French teacher of the school; its honorary and assistant secretaries, and, if you please, its treasurer, who supplies the members with two or three good French papers, and, when the finances of the society permit, provides the means of giving a *soirée littéraire*. I have before me the minute book of one of these interesting associations. I see that since its formation, this particular debating society has altered the whole map of Europe, greatly to the advantage of the United Kingdom. (Fie! Mr. Chairman, what were you about? What culpable complicity on your part!) The young debaters have upset any number of Governments at home and abroad, done away with women's rights, and declared by a crushing majority that ladies who can make good puddings are far more useful members of society than those who can make good speeches. In literature, the respective merits of *l'Ecole classique* and *l'Ecole romantique* have been discussed, and the three unities declared absurd and tyrannical.

The speakers are not allowed to read their speeches, but may use notes for reference,* and I notice that speakers, who at first only venture short remarks, soon grew bold enough to hold forth for ten minutes at a time. In many instances, the president has had to adjourn a debate to the next meeting, on account of the number of orators wishing to take part in it. These minutes, written in very good French indeed, do great credit to the young secretary who entered them. I have myself been present at meetings of these societies, and I assure you that if you could see these young fellows rise from their seats, and bowing respectfully to the president, say to him: "*Monsieur le Président, je demande la parole*," you would agree with me that, so far as good order, perfect courtesy, and unlimited respect for opposite views are concerned, these small gatherings would compare favourably with the meetings of honourables and even right-honourables that are held at the Westminster Palace and the Palais Bourbon.

It is clear to my mind that, by such means, English boys can be made to speak French in the most interesting manner, and the one best suited to their taste. I firmly believe that if the great schools, public or private, were to start similar societies, that if all young men knowing a little

* See Appendix (G.).

French were to form in their districts such associations under the leadership of able and cheerful French gentlemen, England would, in a few years, have a generation of French-speaking men.

I have always been at a loss to understand how boys who have been studying a language for nine or ten years, should leave school perfectly unable to converse intelligibly in that language for five minutes together. It seems nothing short of scandalous.

If the knowledge of French in England is to become a reality instead of being a fiction, however bold my suggestion may appear, it has, at any rate, reason and common sense on its side, as all fair-minded Englishmen will admit.

One or two English educationalists, who have invented the *theory* of education, dignified it into a kind of theology and made themselves its high priests, have done me the honour of criticising these remarks of mine somewhat humorously.

Outside their chapel, no salvation.

According to them, education was not made for man, but man for education: their own, of course. The hat is not made to suit the head, it is the head that is made for the hat. One of the theories of these gentlemen is that, in order to teach French successfully, you must not be French, that is to say, "*qu'il ne'st pas besoin de tenir la chose pour en raisonner.*"

This somewhat maladroit theory lets the cat out of the bag. These educationalists have good reasons to content themselves with teaching grammar to their pupils, who would inevitably be moved to laughter if they heard such teachers trying to talk French. So, at the foundation of their Society, they declared *hic et nunc*, in the presence of an audience of at least twelve or fifteen persons, that the teaching of colloquial French was an absurdity, a recognised impossibility; and it was from one of them that I heard this remark: "M. Chassang's grammar is very good, but being in French is useless to us."

Comment is unnecessary, is it not?

To show to what hands the teaching of French is confided, I take the liberty of reproducing here a letter I received one day from a master whose name I withhold, but whose ignorance deserves to be exposed.

Here it is;

"SIR,

"I am reading *La Tulipe Noire*, of Alexander Dumas, with my pupils. May I ask you for the explanation of a phrase which I cannot explain satisfactorily to myself, and which I do not find in any dictionary I have consulted, Littré included. At page 201 occurs the phrase, '*mais n'en n'était*

rien moins que sûr.' What is the force of the double *ne?* If you can find time to drop a note I shall be much obliged."

It had never occurred to the poor fellow that it was a printer's error.

I laughed till my sides ached.

Here is a worthy man, who appears to follow the precept laid down, some years ago, by a head master who is now one of the great dignitaries of the Anglican Church: "Gentlemen," said he to his assistant masters, "don't object to me that you know no French: you can always be a page ahead of your form."

I publish the above letter all the more readily that, as I have *enlightened* the gentleman, it is not probable he has boasted either of his letter or my answer.

I know a principal of a private school, who himself undertakes to teach French to his pupils. Twice a week he assumes the title of *Mossiou*, and when each lesson is at an end, he announces the fact to his young patients by the formula:

"*C'est temps de romper.*"

On his prospectuses it is stated that "special attention is given to the practical teaching of modern languages."

I could fill a volume with such recollections.

To return to the debating societies, I believe nothing would be easier than to employ this method for teaching our French school-boys to speak English. A competent and genial master is all that is required.

It would be a useful and practical undertaking: useful, because it would help our future generations to make acquaintance with the splendid literature of England; practical, because it would enable them to develop their commercial relations more easily, and feel at home half the world over; and, moreover, it would be a patriotic labour, because when England and France have learnt to understand each other, that understanding will lead to mutual respect and admiration.

XXIV.

ENTENTE CORDIALE.

It is not to the political press of a country that one must turn for help to understand correctly the sentiments which animate that country towards another. These papers, which must needs make themselves the echo of the national susceptibilities, and keep awake the patriotism of the country, only represent the public sentiments towards another nation for a very limited time, and that, too, under the influence of a momentary feeling of passion or annoyance. Those who would arrive at the truth must rather study popular authors, the theatre, and the literary press, which is uninfluenced by political events.

It is to such sources that I turn for all the materials I need in order to prove that France has not the least antipathy to England.

Let us take the stage.

Our stage managers, it is true, invariably adorn the Englishman with long red whiskers, put canoe-

like boots on his feet, and arm him with a gigantic umbrella. This is for the benefit of the gallery, and provokes not the kind of laughter which proceeds from a rancorous heart, but the good, hearty, harmless mirth that one indulges in at the sight of an adorable little wideawake face disguised with grandmother's cap and spectacles. Behind these red whiskers, see the good qualities and virtues which we do not hesitate to recognise in the man.

I was quite a child when I was taken to see the *Prise de Pékin* played at a Parisian theatre. Yet I have never forgotten the hero of this grand spectacular drama. I fancy I still see this Englishman, walking calmly through a shower of bullets, heedless of danger, and saluting as *Petite malhonnête* the Chinaman who shoots off his hat while he is jotting down something in his note-book.

This gallant son of Albion is a *Times* correspondent.

He is made a prisoner by the Chinese, and taken before the emperor. The mandarins order him to prostrate himself before the sovereign of the Celestial Empire.

"Jamais," he says, "la Angleterre était la première pays du monde."

"You shall be put to torture," cry his persecutors.

"Ho! vo povez cette chose," he replies unmoved.

"You shall be made to obey."

"Ho! vo povez pas cette chose."

"Your legs will be broken: no longer able to stand, you will be obliged to prostrate yourself."

"Briser les jambes à moî, ho! vo povez cette chose; obliger moî à prosterner moî devant cette petite stioupide de Fils du Ciel! no! no, vo povez pas cette chose."

He is taken away to be handed over to the torturer.

A little later he reappears on the stage, staggering and pale.

"Prostrate yourself," cry the mandarins.

But he, gathering up all his strength, and mastering his agony, casts a contemptuous glance at the emperor and his mandarins, and cries:

"La Angleterre était la première pays du monde."

He is condemned to death.

In the next scene he prepares to meet his fate. As he thinks of his poor *petit femme* and his *petites enfants*, over there in dear, foggy England, he is near giving way to grief, but, happily for his dignity and honour, he perceives a mandarin looking at him, and remembers that he must die like a Briton, no more give way

to sad thoughts, and, above all, let no one see that his heart is near breaking. Composing his features, he walks towards his executioners with a staggering, but resolute gait, and once more defies them with the words:

"La Angleterre était la première pays du monde."

These wrong genders, this odd pronunciation, evoked a few smiles, it is true, but very few of those smiling faces were tearless. That virile and thoroughly English manner of mastering the most poignant physical and moral suffering, that internal struggle, that fervent patriotism, that national pride, and last thought for home and its dear ones, all helped to move the hearts of the spectators, and the good folks, who had come to applaud Clement Just in the *rôle* of the Englishman, returned to their homes friends and admirers of England.

We have many plays containing English characters. In all those which I have seen or read, the author has made the English original, phlegmatic, and eccentric, but good, patriotic, generous, and brave.

Let us take the modern novel.

From *Corinne*, Madame de Staël's master-piece, to *Colomba*, the master-piece of Prosper Mérimée, I find the English presented to French readers

in the most flattering colours. No novelist portrays them as hereditary enemies of France. All the defects that are brought out, their amusing eccentricities, their astonishing contrasts, all these things are painted without bitterness. I am not speaking of the English woman, who has always appeared to the imagination of the French novelist as an ideal heroine: no doubt, because she has the reputation of being chaste, tender, and devoted, and probably also because, when she is beautiful, she has no rival. Although, to read certain newspapers, one would imagine that we hate, or ought to hate, everything English, the English novel has never been so popular in France as it is at the present day.

I open Victor Hugo's books, and there I find the following phrases on the subject of England: "As a glorious and free land, I admire her; as a hospitable one, I love her." Further on he says: "England* is all greatness." Such is the illustrious poet's opinion of England.

"Look around you, and see which are the most prosperous, enlightened, honest, charitable countries: are they not those in which everyone has a right to speak the whole truth, without respect for persons, privileges, prejudices, and abuses? Consider the greatness of England, the

* From the Preface of "L'Homme qui rit."

growth of America, the increasing prosperity of Australia. . . . ." Such are the reflections of Laboulaye on the same subject.

England's praises have been sung by such men as Messrs. Rénan, Louis Blanc, Taine, About, Challemel-Lacour, Esquiros, to name only the foremost of modern French writers. Ought not their opinions to weigh as much as the rambling stories of disappointed Egyptian bondholders?

When I have added that the names of Voltaire and Madame de Staël ought to be placed at the head of the list of French admirers that England has won for herself, shall I not have proved, so far as the French are concerned, that the hereditary hatred of the two nations is an absurdity?

But the French may say: "That is perfectly true: we speak very well of the English; but they certainly detest us: do they not say all the evil they can of us?"

And Voltaire's saying rises naturally to our minds: "Perhaps we are both wrong."

But, my dear compatriots, for the love of common sense, do get rid of that prejudice.

What pleasure can there be in entertaining such false notions?

It is true that, on the 2nd of June, in the present year, the Lord Mayor of London refused

to allow a vote of condolence with France, on the occasion of Victor Hugo's death, to appear on the paper. Several French journals were indignant in consequence, but the English Press only laughed at the episode. And, indeed, there was no other sensible way of treating the matter. I assure you it is highly probable that the Lord Mayor had never heard of Victor Hugo.

At the funeral of the great poet, England was officially represented by Lord Lyons, Ambassador of Her Britannic Majesty; her genius was represented by the splendid wreath, so greatly admired and appreciated as the offering of England's Poet-Laureate; her sympathy was conveyed to us by thousands of Englishmen who had hastened to Paris to salute the great genius of the century on his passage to immortality.

Ah! my Lord Mayor, pray rest assured that your condolences could very well be dispensed with.

I can never forgive that ephemeral and carnivalesque lordship, called the Lord Mayor of London, for taking us French people in as he does.

Armed with a goodly stock of prejudices, I landed one day in England with the firm conviction, shared by my countrymen, that, after the Sovereign, the Lord Mayor of London was the most important potentate in the United Kingdom.

How those good English people laughed at me! How I was joked and teased! I was introduced, in society, "as a man who believed in the Lord Mayor." And when, one day, I innocently suggested that a friend of mine, who was a candidate for a vacant professorship at a University, should get a testimonial from the Lord Mayor, the company laughed till tears came to their eyes, and declared the joke to be "the creamiest one of the season."

By employing a similar proceeding to the one I adopted above, I might give quotations from English authors to prove to you that France has the sympathies of intelligent England;* but I prefer, even at the risk of talking of myself, to give you the benefit of some personal experiences.

During the course of last year, I have lectured here and there, in England and Scotland, before fashionable as well as popular audiences. From each of them did I receive the same hearty reception. Do not think for a moment that I am vain or stupid enough to put down the harvest of bravos which I reaped to my very insignificant personality, inasmuch as I had taken a few liberties with friend John Bull.

No, those cheers were a homage to the subject

* See Appendix (H.).

which I had chosen: I had come to preach the love of France to those English and Scotch people. It was by reciting the litany of the virtues of the French that I won the forgiveness of my hearers for having published their own failings and eccentricities.

Ought I to withhold these facts? Surely not. I would repeat them on all sides, and to all men; if a few journalists, for whom England is a closed letter, are of opinion that I am not in the swim, I cannot help that.

On the eve of the day on which I lectured in St. Andrew's Hall, Glasgow, Mr. John Bright had made a political speech at Birmingham. I quoted the following passage from it:

"The people of France are the people possessing the land of the country. They are as peaceable as you, and I do not believe there is the smallest idea, on the part of any human being outside a lunatic asylum in France, that it is at all likely that France and England will ever come into conflict, even though they have a somewhat difficult question, which I doubt not they will amicably settle, in connection with the affairs of Egypt."

Ah! if Mr. John Bright had but been in the room, I should have had to promptly give place to him, and allow him to receive in person an ovation

which was addressed to him alone, and not to the man who had only repeated his words.

John Bright, the finest of John Bulls, the personification of the British lion in all his majesty! John Bright, the illustrious orator, whose voice never fails to make itself heard in England, when there is a useful reform, an act of humanity, or a peaceful policy, to be advocated!

I left St. Andrew's Hall with my heart full of joy, promising myself that I would make known to my countrymen how remarks, favourable to France, are received by the English and the Scotch. It was a duty laid upon me, as it were.

No, my dear compatriots, in the name of common sense, do not believe that the *Times* or any other daily paper, that fancies itself obliged, from time to time, under the influence of a little political cloud, to produce a more or less anti-French article, represents in the smallest degree the sentiments which animate the intelligent and enlightened population of England towards you. Your good qualities, your virtues, and your genius, are known and appreciated here, and if your failings raise a smile, and if you are represented on the English stage as dancing masters skimming about on tip-toe, and playing the kit, it has no more significance

than the red whiskers and large umbrella that I was speaking of just now.

The most brilliant nation in the world may shake hands with the wisest. Both are mistresses of their own destinies. The object they pursue here below is so different that, if they must have quarrels, it seems as though it ought to be lovers' quarrels.

The French are the happiest people to be found on the face of the earth. The land of their birth is large enough to hold them, and fruitful enough to feed them.*

What is the use of running after vain glory, and founding colonies for other nations, when one is so comfortable at home?

Let us keep to our *rôle*. We are the masters of modern thought; this is our true glory. The colony that demands our most constant care is France.

* The number of Europeans who emigrated to America in 1884 is 735,000. I see by the official Report of the American Government that, out of this number, 168,000 were English, Irish, and Scotch, 232,000 Germans, 59,000 Swedes, 27,000 Norwegians, 89,000 Canadians. The rest are lumped. The number of French is so insignificant that t has not been thought worth while to mention it separately, Is this not a proof of French well-being?

Let us develop our commerce and our inexhaustible resources by living at peace with the rest of the world. Let us cease to make ourselves feared, and aim at making ourselves loved.

The English multiply at such a rate that they are fatally obliged to make colonies; but it is not this which constitutes their strength, nor adds to their happiness.

India will one day cease to belong to them, and they will have to spend more blood over its loss than they did over its conquest.

Australia, which manifests clearer symptoms of independence every day, will one day be what America is now: an independent nation.

Nevertheless, it will be a proud thing for a European nation to have peopled the Antipodes with a civilised race; and when the amputation has been performed, England will probably be all the better for it.

To Jacques Bonhomme.

Is it not to our interest to retain the sympathies of a country, which bought between the 13th and 20th of May, 1885, in foreign markets, our own principally, £5,000 worth of poultry, 5,206,544

pounds of butter, 24,641,040 eggs, 2,666,720 pounds of cheese, 1,312,080 pounds of potatoes, 45,326 bushels of onions, &c.?

How happy nations might be if they really tried! The fabulous sum of £200,000,000 is spent every year by Europeans over their wars. When will the Ministers for War be able to hand over their budgets to the Ministers for Commerce and Agriculture? When will there be a Minister for Peace in each European Cabinet? He is the man whom I should like to see taking up a princely salary!

Let us respect her, this England: is she not the temple of the "thrice sweet and gracious goddess," Liberty?

Let us love her, this old island, so hospitable that, like Don Ruy Gomez de Silva, she would die a hundred deaths rather than give up her guest, were he Communist or Nihilist.

Let us respect her, this nation to whom we may be able to teach disinterestedness, but who can teach us wisdom and perseverance.

We, a brilliant and chevaleresque race; we, who have no occasion to be jealous of any other, for

we have held the destinies of Continental Europe in the hollow of our hand; we, sons of that ancient Gaul, whose valour in battle, magnanimity in victory, and amiability and good faith have remained proverbial, let us hold out our hand to this neighbour, who alone possesses a history that can compare with our own, and who, in a few years, will be governed by a Prince Charmant, who is a friend of France, and an admirer of all that is French.

And you, my dear neighbours, let me remind you what France has done to merit your respect. I will not dwell upon her glorious past, and will only mention in few words what I find to her credit in the present century.

France, ruined by the wars and extravagances of Louis XIV., exasperated by the turpitudes of Louis XV., encouraged by the weakness of Louis XVI., revolts. Thrones tremble, and the whole world is awe-struck at the terrible Revolution. Kings league themselves together against her; but such is her might that, with soldiers half armed, half clothed, half fed, she puts to flight the allied armies of the enemies, who had sworn to crush her.

Up rises a man and wrests from her all the liberty she had just bought at the price of so much

bloodshed. To steady himself upon an unsteady throne, Napoleon engages in dynastic wars for ten years, marching his victorious army from capital to capital, while Europe wonders and trembles. At length the eagle falls, and France, sick of military glory, beaten, but not humiliated, takes breath and submits to the Restoration imposed upon her by the allied invaders. To console herself for the loss of the Republic, a form of government least calculated to foster literature and the fine arts, she profits by the return of monarchical rule to inaugurate the Golden Age of 1830. I say *the Age of* 1830, for such is the name this epoch, one of the most glorious in the history of France, will be known by in the next century. Now appear, in poetry, Victor Hugo, Lamartine, Alfred de Musset, Béranger; in fiction, Balzac, Alexandre Dumas, George Sand; in history, Thiers, Guizot; in political oratory, Manuel, Foy, Berryer; in criticism, Sainte-Beuve, Jules Janin; in painting, Horace Vernet, Ingres, Delacroix, Gudin; in music, Boïeldieu, Herold, Halévy, Auber; in tragedy, Talma, Rachel; in comedy, Mars, Duvernoy; in opera, Nourrit Duprey, Lablache, Baroilhet, Malibran.

I have mentioned but a few of the princes of talent.

To keep her hand in practice, she makes the con-

quest of Algeria, and, later on, having nothing else particular in hand, she takes it into her head to make the Suez Canal, a gigantic undertaking, which of itself would be enough to save the nineteenth century from oblivion. Ever enamoured of great names, she re-establishes the Empire, because there is a man in the world who bears the name of the victor of Austerlitz. Smitten once more with that strange malady, the love of glory, she fights Russia in 1855 to prevent her from going to Constantinople, and Austria in 1859 to create Italian unity. Then comes that terrible year, the year 1870. With an army of 250,000 men, she proclaims war, like the child that she is, with a nation, which for sixteen years had been silently preparing to avenge her defeat at Jena, and which had 1,200,000 men ready to take the field. She is conquered, and, alas! humiliated. She pays her conquerors £200,000,000, but this she has almost forgotten, and sees wrenched from her two provinces that she loved and was beloved by: this she will never forget. The following year, she holds up her head, the richest and most esteemed of Continental nations. To-day, if she only had a leader, republican or monarch, she would be the strongest.

Ah! Messieurs les Anglais, respect her, love her, that beautiful France! I have often heard

the sincerest and most intelligent of you say that England would probably have been unable to do as much.

THE more I observe England, the more do I feel convinced that I was right in concluding my first impressions of "John Bull and his Island," with the words:

"France and England together would seem to unite in themselves all the qualities that intelligence and industry can develop, and the union of these two great nations, which, under the reign of a virtuous queen, has been steadily growing more and more perfect, justifies the prediction that only in the arts of peace will they ever again be rivals; and that, hand in hand, they will ever be found mutually encouraging each other in the path of progress and liberty."

If this be a prophecy, why should I not indulge in it with safety?

I am not in my own country.

THE END.

APPENDIX.

(A.)

LETTER OF AN ENGLISHMAN ON FRANCE.

(*Pall Mall Gazette*, October 29, 1884.)

"Alas! that so many millions of harmless toilers whose ruling passion is to be independent, whose highest hope is to lead a life of peaceful labour, with a prospect of quiet days free from toil at the close, should be for ever represented to be quite otherwise than what they are by a few reckless or unscrupulous journalists, who, profiting by the helplessness of peasants to make themselves heard beyond their fields or their narrow streets, use them as so much fuel to keep alive the ancient hostility of rival races! Englishmen should believe nothing of the claptrap rhetoric of Paris journalists about the hatred of Jacques Bonhomme for John Bull.

"I have a hobby, a hobby which Paris journalists, who complacently manufacture opinions and sentiments for the peasantry in boulevard cafés, but who detest all contact with the raw material, would scoff at as one of the many forms of mania to which Englishmen alone are liable. It is to study

the peasantry of France, their habits, customs, sentiments, and traditions, in those wild districts whose inhabitants are generally spoken of by Parisians with a mocking jest, or a contemptuous shrug of the shoulders. In my wanderings in provincial France I have broken bread with the most uncouth peasants, and slept under their roofs; but not in prosperous villages, mountain hovels, or huts in the midst of great forests, have I yet found a man who by his speech or his manner showed that his mind was prejudiced against the English race.

"As for the picture of the farmer and herdsman spitting at the engraving of Wellington, it would be laughable if it were not so mischievous. But in some articles the French peasant is represented as a sordid being who would readily sell his vegetables to the enemy of his country or his town or village to save his cottage from being shelled, or his skin from being scratched by the sword. One side of the medal is as false as the other. The French peasant is peaceful, sober, and laborious. He possesses in a remarkable degree that invaluable quality than which there is no higher intelligence for the solution of the great problem of existence, which consist in patiently accepting one's fate, however hard it may be, and making the best of it. His ideal of life is the independence which is the fruit of labour, and he is satisfied with very little in the days of his strength, because the prospect of eating his own bread when his strength is gone makes him happy. He is thrifty and self-denying, but he is not deficient in any of the generous sentiments. He befriends his poorer relatives, he can be hospitable and charitable, and a patriot, too, when occasion calls, as history has proved. But he is no fire-eater, no yearner after social regeneration by baptism of blood, no dreamer of new worlds to conquer, nor the revival of dying feuds in ghastly wars. The surging

passions of the capital, bred and fed by vice and improvidence, are horrible to him. He wishes the world to be at peace, so that he may be left alone; and be allowed to raise his flocks and grow his corn and wine in peace. He feels that it is his duty to hate Germany in a theoretic sort of way, but he trusts that he may not live to see the day when he or his sons may be called upon to avenge the now dim disasters of the terrible years.

"As for the traditional hatred of Frenchmen for Englishmen, as far as he is concerned, it has died out long ago. It would need something that would come home much more vividly to his understanding than an Egyptian or a Chinese question to revive it. I should like to know where the French villages are to be found where a man speaking of the English as a 'great people' would be pelted with stones. It would be interesting to learn what these ferocious villagers would do to a real live Englishman who appeared in their midst. I do not hesitate to say that such villages and villagers only exist in the imagination of the Paris journalist, whose recollections of rural life have probably become confused with the later impressions of comic opera.

"It may seem presumptuous in an Englishman to treat the lively portraits drawn by the Paris journalist of the French peasant as ridiculous caricatures. The egotism of such a position is not, however, so flagrant as it may appear. The capital of a country ought to be its heart, and therefore in most perfect sympathy with the most distant parts of the body.* Few capitals could be named that fail so completely to realise this ideal as Paris. When the born or trained Parisian speaks of France he means Paris, and when the peasant

* It was M. Rouher who, speaking of France, said: "The heart is good, but the head is bad." But, contrary to our English friend, by *heart* he meant the provinces, and by *head* Paris.

speaks of Paris he thinks of something almost as far away and vague as London or St. Petersburg. Paris is in railway and telegraphic communication with the provinces, it is true, but of the intercommunication of thought and sympathy, which should exist between the metropolis and the nation, there is very little. Nay, more, the majority of Parisians not only cultivate indifference with regard to all that passes in the rural districts, except such news of the crops as may affect their pockets, but systematically speak of the peasantry as a race apart, and one to be despised. It is not astonishing, then, that Paris journalists should draw the most fantastic and inconsistent pictures of the peasant, representing him in one sentence as the fiercest of patriots, thirsting for an opportunity of 'avenging Waterloo,' and in the next as a caitiff and traitor, ever ready to sell his country, to no matter what enemy, to save his property or his skin. In the absence of better reason for retaining it than the wild and random writings of some journalists, Englishmen should dismiss the thought that Jacques Bonhomme hates John Bull."

(B.)

I have taken down the following observations made by the dear neighbours on each other. They are taken from newspapers or books written in a friendly manner. I will not inflict upon the reader the productions from either Anglophobist or Gallophobist pens.

1. "Mr. Francis Wyatt Truscott was elected yesterday Lord Mayor of London, and made a baronet according to time-honoured custom. When his year of office is over, Sir Wyatt Truscott will become Mr. Truscott, as before."

2. "Lord Salisbury kissed hands on his appointment as Leader of Her Majesty's Opposition, in succession to the late Lord Beaconsfield."

3. "English young men are more respectful to their fathers than French ones. As a proof of this, I will say, that in the aristocracy, in the gentry, and in most gentle families of England, the son respectfully calls his father *governor*."

4. "I aver that it rained so incessantly in the metropolis, during the week I resided in it, and the rain was so thickly intermingled with soot that, whenever I wished to fill my inkstand, I had only to open my window to fill the standish with black writing fluid."

5. The following is taken from a work of fiction, I am happy to say: "Sir Charles Templetown was the eldest son of Lord Charles Templetown, and as such represented his father's native town in the House of Commons, whilst his lordship represented it in the Upper House."

(C.)

English pronunciation is a stumbling block to us, but English syntax is most easy, and the verbs can be learned in an hour; all the names of inanimate things are of the neuter gender, and the adjectives, always invariable, are without exception placed before the nouns.

I open at random the Funeral Oration on Turenne by Fléchier, and I translate into English the first sentence that

I come across, and you will see that Alexander Dumas was right:

"Les actions d'un homme modeste, libéral, désintéressé, dévoué au service du prince et de la patrie, grand dans l'adversité par son courage, dans la prospérité par sa modestie, dans les difficultés par sa prudence, dans les périls par sa valeur, dans la religion par sa piété."

"The actions of a man modest, liberal, disinterested, devoted to the service of the prince and the country, great in adversity by his courage, in prosperity by his modesty, in difficulties by his prudence, in perils by his valour, in religion by his piety."

(D.)

French Impulsiveness and English Sang-froid.

Two incidents that took place lately, in Paris and London respectively, may serve to illustrate French impulsiveness and English *sang-froid*.

The other evening the opera *Les Huguenots* was played at the Grand Opera. The singer, who took the part of Marcel, was out of sorts, and sang flat. An old gentleman, seated in an orchestra stall, was observed to be restless and uncomfortable during the performance. At the end of the last act, Marcel passes before the church, just at the moment when the Duke of Nevers and his partisans come out of it.

"*Qui vive?*" cries the Duke.

"Huguenot," answers Marcel, and he falls shot dead by the followers of the Duke.

This part of the opera had no sooner been acted, than the old gentleman, who now looked radiant, rose from his seat,

put on his hat, and, shaking his fist at the dead hero, to the great amusement of the public, cried at the top of his voice:

"You donkey, it serves you right, you have been singing out of tune the whole evening."

And indignantly he left the theatre.

In a beautifully appointed house afternoon tea, served in costly china, had just been brought to the drawing-room, when the mistress of the house inadvertently overturned the tea-table. Without the slightest show of vexation, without *oh!* or *ah!* Lady R. calmly touched the bell, and, on the appearance of the domestic, merely said:

"Take this away, and bring more tea."

"My dear," whispered Lady P. to a friend, "she won't match that china for £80."

I cannot resist the pleasure of inserting a letter which I received a short time ago, and which shows to what extremes British *sang-froid* and *sans gêne* may be carried. I reproduce the letter intact.

"Sir,—Hearing of your kindness, and thinking that you would excuse me for asking your assistance with the undermentioned questions, explain to you how I came to address you. Will you kindly reply, any time when most convenient?

"1st—Please translate into French the enclosed pieces of English.

"2nd—What are the etymologies of *aube*, *lisière*, and *chat?*

"3rd—Write some account of the lives of Octave Feuillet, Alphonse Daudet, George Ohnet, and Emile Zola.

"Hoping to be excused if I have encroached too much on your valuable time,

"I remain,

"Yours truly,

"S.T.S."

What, my dear friend, not even a stamp for the answer!

(E.)

On the subject of those excellent colonising agents, the missionaries, an Englishman told me one day, between Saint-Mâlo and Southampton, how those pious apostles set about rounding off John Bull's domains. The anecdote, though not personal, was not the less amusing for that.

On arriving upon his new field of operation, the missionary places the Bible in the hands of the natives, and thus addresses them:

"My dear brethren, lift your eyes to heaven, and pray. Lift your eyes . . . . higher . . . . higher . . . . still higher . . . . that's it; now close them, and do not open them until I tell you . . . . that's right . . . . not yet . . . . there; now open your eyes, you are saved."

When the worthy natives open their eyes, their territory is gone.

(F.)

"A painful incident took place at Glossop-road Baptist Chapel, Sheffield, during Divine service on Sunday, the 21st of June, 1885. Mr. M. K., a member of the congregation, who recently made a scene after communion, has adopted

strong views against the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. Yesterday, when the hymn, 'Around the Throne of God in Heaven thousands of children stand,' concluding with the chorus, 'Glory, glory, glory,' was being sung, Mr. K. remained standing, and turning to the congregation, said, 'This is a hateful lie. There are not thousands of children in Heaven singing, 'Glory, glory, glory.'' By this time the pastor, the Rev. John Bailey, had left the pulpit, and, seizing Mr. K. by the shoulders, commanded him to sit down, and forced him into his seat. The deacon, after some opposition, removed him from the chapel."

(G.)

STATUTES OF A FRENCH DEBATING SOCIETY.

CHAPITRE I.

(*Constitution de la Société.*)

Art. 1.—Il est formé une Société ayant pour but de discuter en français les questions du jour.

Art. 2.—La Société s'appellera : Société de discussion de . . . .

Art. 3.—La Société se composera exclusivement des professeurs et des élèves (présents et anciens) du collège.

Art. 4.—Le premier professeur de français sera de droit président de la Société. Les autres professeurs pourront être vice-présidents. Le trésorier et les secrétaires seront choisis parmi les élèves.

Art. 5.—Tous les élèves de *telle et telle classe*, qui apprennent le français, seront membres de la Société *ex officio*, s'ils le désirent.

Art. 6.—Tout élève du collège, qui aura atteint l'âge de

quatorze ans, et qui remplira les conditions d'aptitude voulues, pourra être admis dans la Société.

CHAPITRE II.

(*Election des Membres.*)

Art. 1.—Tout candidat devra être présenté par quatre membres, dont l'un sera le président ou l'un des vice-présidents.

Art. 2.—Le nom du candidat, ainsi que ceux de ses quatre parrains, devront être affichés quinze jours avant l'élection.

Art. 3.—L'élection d'un candidat aura lieu à la majorité des membres présents à la séance.

Art. 4.—Tout candidat qui aura été refusé ne pourra se représenter pendant un mois.

Art. 5.—Tout candidat qui aura été refusé trois fois ne pourra plus se représenter.

CHAPITRE III.

(*Bureau de la Société.*)

Art. 1.—Le trésorier et les secrétaires seront élus une fois par an, au ballottage, à la première séance qui aura lieu après les grandes vacances.

Art. 2.—Le président de jour se charge de maintenir le bon ordre dans les réunions.

Art. 3.—Le président arrêtera les comptes du trésorier à la dernière séance du mois de juillet.

Art. 4.—Le procès-verbal de la dernière réunion sera lu à chaque séance par l'un des secrétaires.

Art. 5.—L'un des secrétaires gardera les archives de la Société.

CHAPITRE IV.

(*Réunions.*)

Art. 1.—Les réunions auront lieu une fois par semaine.

Art. 2.—Le *quorum* est fixé à la moitié des membres de la Société plus un.

Art. 3.—Le jour et l'heure des réunions seront fixés par le président.

Art. 4.—Les réunions ne pourront être présidées que par le président ou l'un des vice-présidents.

Art. 5.—Le président aura le droit d'expulser de la réunion tout membre dont la conduite aura été, à ses yeux, répréhensible. Tout membre, qui aura été ainsi expulsé trois fois, sera exclu de la Société.

CHAPITRE V.

(*Débats.*)

Art. 1.—Tout sujet de discussion sera arrêté à la réunion précédente et affiché.

Art. 2.—Aucun orateur ne pourra garder la parole plus de dix minutes. Pour éviter les personnalités, tout orateur devra s'adresser au président. Tout membre, désirant parler, se lèvera, et dira au président: "Monsieur le Président, je demande la parole." La parole pourra être accordée au même membre plusieurs fois.

Art. 3.—Les discussions sur les questions religieuses sont complètement interdites. Toutes les questions littéraires, philologiques, historiques, sociales, politiques, peuvent être abordées, après avoir reçu la sanction du président.

Art. 4.—Aucun orateur ne pourra lire les paroles qu'il prononce; il pourra cependant se servir de notes.

Art. 5.—Le président, dans son pouvoir discrétionnaire, pourra prier tout membre de prendre part aux débats.*

Art. 6.—Le président se réserve le droit de corriger la rédaction des propositions et les discours des orateurs.

Art. 7.—Le président ne pourra pas voter, excepté dans les questions concernant l'existence ou la constitution de la Société. Dans ces derniers cas la voix du président comptera double.

Art. 8.—Quand le nombre des voix sera égal, pour et contre une proposition, la voix du premier secrétaire comptera double.

CHAPITRE VI.

(*Réunion Annuelle.*)

Art. 1.—Il sera tenu, une fois par an, une réunion qui s'appellera *Réunion Annuelle.*

Art. 2.—Cette réunion annuelle sera la deuxième réunion statutaire du mois de Décembre.

Art. 3.—Le sujet de la discussion, choisi pour cette réunion annuelle, sera arrêté un mois à l'avance et envoyé à tous les membres de la Société.

Art. 4.—La Société donnera aussi, une fois par an, une soirée dramatique et littéraire en français.

CHAPITRE VII.

(*Revenus de la Société.*)

Art. 1.—Le droit d'entrée est fixé à une demi-couronne le cotisation annuelle est aussi fixée à une demi-couronne.

* This article is particularly indispensable. How many members would otherwise be happy to content themselves with listening !

Art. 2.—Aucune somme ne sera dépensée sans le consentement de la majorité des membres de la Société.

Art. 3.—Une amende d'un shilling sera infligée à tout membre qui se sera absenté d'une réunion sans s'être auparavant excusé auprès du président.

Art. 4.—Une amende d'un penny sera infligée par le président à tout membre qui se sera servi d'un mot anglais ugé inutile.

Art. 5.—Les amendes seront payées au trésorier quinze jours après l'infliction au plus tard.

Art. 6.—La première cotisation sera payée deux mois au plus tard après l'admission. Les cotisations suivantes seront payées avant le 28 Février de chaque année.

Art. 7.—Aux dates d'échéance, mentionnées dans l article précédent, les retardataires seront priés de verser leur cotisation, et un mois leur sera accordé avant que leur expulsion soit prononcée.

Art. 8.—Tout membre, qui aura été exclu de la Société pour n'avoir pas payé sa cotisation, pourra être réadmis, dans les conditions requises par les articles 1 et 2 du Chapitre II.

Art. 9.—Tout ancien élève du collège, qui demeure en dehors de Londres et de la banlieue, pourra appartenir à la Société, comme membre honoraire, moyennant payement d'un shilling par an, et jouir de tous les avantages et privilèges des membres effectifs.

(H.)

Extract from *Gordon's Diary at Khartoum:*

"Herbin (the French Consul at Khartoum), I liked very much; he was a most agreeable and gentlemanly Frenchman,

and very sharp. The diplomatic . . . . called him *names* in a telegram; but I found him fairly just, though naturally with a French bias. For my part, I cannot see what harm the French can do us if they had a voice in Egypt, and I can see much good arising from it. I declare if they had had a voice in Egypt, the present state of affairs would never have existed. If you can find *no chivalry* in your own house, you had better borrow it from your neighbour."

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